THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

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CHRISTMAS MUSINGS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MRS. M. F. TUCKER.

Upon this blessed Christmas morn
My yearning heart is thither borne,
Where friends and kindred smiling meet
Their loving wishes to repeat,
And as aforetime nestles near,
To wish you "Merry Christmas," dear.

Alas! for we are parted wide,
The weary, weary miles divide;
Yet time and distance can impart
No change unto the steadfast heart,
Whose love grows stronger year by year
With each succeeding Christmas, dear!

You know how sad my life has been,
What clouds of grief enveloped in;
You know how sad my life must be,
What haunting shadows follow me;
With little left to bless or cheer,
But thought of those who love me, dear.

And as a bird, whose wild unrest
Hath led it from the parent nest,
Longs with a yearning deep and vain
For the sweet shelter once again,
So do I vainly long to hear
The old-time "Merry Christmas, dear!"

Yet should my Christmas joys run low,
'Twill soothe and gladden me to know,
That when the festive throng are gay,
Some faithful hearts will turn away,
And yearn to whisper in my ear,
"A merry, merry Christmas, dear!"

ONE OF THE FAMILY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGBERD," "CARLTON'S YEAR," &c.

CHAPTER XII.

A CHAPTER THAT MAY BE CALLED INTERESTING.

We often hear it somewhat needlessly asserted that seemingly impassive persons are capable of feeling, and do feel, the touch of sorrow as much and as deeply (even more deeply, it is unjustly added) as the Impulsive and Demonstrative. Without doubt, they do; and the foolish pride that causes them to hide their grief, not seldom drives it to seek an outlet by unusual and even hurtful channels. Nature compels from us obedience to her laws, and exacts her dues to the uttermost in whatever kind we pay them. The Spartan boy was bitten by the fox, notwithstanding that he managed to wear a stoical countenance, and he would probably not have suffered nearly so much if he had indulged in a good cry. Ernest Woodford and his wife were both of that reserved and secretive class who seem to have been born to live in a world of their own without sympathy with their fellow-creatures; but they were not insensible, as we have seen, to insult. When such persons consent to live together, they generally fall out, as these did; but when they agree, or have become reconciled they form a very dangerous pair. Their mutual society blunts still more their dull susceptibilities; they remove one another further and further from their fellow-creatures day by day; so that at last all that concerns their relatives (for friends they have none) with respect to them is the question of, "Who shall be heir?" The unhappy couple, conscious that this is the case, become sometimes haters of their kin and kind.

Again, one of the necessary consequences of deep-rooted selfishness and egotism is our ignorance of the world; those who never consult the feelings of others, at length are unable even to imagine them; and so Mr. Woodford, who rather prided himself on detecting the baser motives that actuated his fellows, was in reality less capable of judging human nature aright than the impressionable little Evy, his niece of ten years old. His notion, for example, that the fact of his previous marriage was not known in Sandalthwaite, was a most ridiculous one; not a grown-up person in the parish was ignorant that the Black Squire had once had a wife, who had fled his roof; some said by reason of his own brutality, and others on account of the persecutions of Miss Selina. The injured lady had never publicly sued for a divorce; but the details of the separation had been canvassed at the *Wrestlers' Arms*, and talked over in every kitchen within ten miles of Dewbank Hall, again and again. Though Mr. Woodford had put almost the whole length of England between his first and second home, and had left all his servants in the south, and had enjoined, not without success, the strictest silence on the subject upon the members of his family, all his neighbors knew his story; for if a bird of the air will carry the matter to a rich man's ear that we speak against him in our private chamber, there are, on the other hand, whole flocks of carrier-pigeons to tell the world what the rich man does; and they often start with the intelligence even before he has done it.

The mirth, therefore, was general, although concealed, throughout Sandalthwaite, when Mr. Woodford, after due delay, brought home his wife to Dewbank Hall as his newly-selected bride. Even if other things had been favorable, he was himself incapable of carrying out such an imposture. It is embarrassing enough to be taking one's legitimate honeymoon; but to pretend to take it with a lady to whom one has been in the habit of expressing one's opinion without reserve for a couple of years, is an impersonation demanding great resources, and especially the most perfect command of temper. Although, however, Mr. Ernest Woodford broke down most completely in this difficult part, the select audience invited to witness the performance expressed no adverse criticism. It consisted, indeed, mainly and almost solely of Dr. Herbert Warton, who was now a more frequent guest at the Hall than ever. The bond that had reunited his host and hostess in some measure connected him with themselves. The fact was, this poor gentleman had had it in his mind at one time to marry Selina Woodford, and although his love for her had not turned to hate, simply because it had never had any existence, he *did* hate her, inasmuch as she had bestowed the four thousand pounds, of which he stood so much in need, upon somebody else. That somebody, too, was a man who had called himself his friend, and had often expressed in his presence contempt and even disgust towards the lady in question. True, Dr. Warton had not discouraged his depreciatory remarks, and had even contributed to them some severities of his own, but only with the modest purpose of appropriating to himself the more fascinating *painter's leavings*. He deemed it base in Claude Murphy that he should have allied himself with a woman about whom he had spoken so scornfully, notwithstanding that he himself had had the intention of doing the very same thing; for there was not, he argued, the excuse for the other that there was for him. True, Claude Murphy had an income which he found very inadequate to his expenses; but Herbert Warton's means were even more limited, and besides, he was deeply in debt. The Painter loved pleasure; but with the doctor, pleasure, or rather such freedom from painful reflection as liquor could insure, had become absolutely necessary. The mere good-for-nought takes his ruin pretty kindly; a fool from the first, he gets to be something of a philosopher at the last, and dies in his ditch, if not decently, at least without malignity; but the man of parts, who has neglected his opportunities, and knows it—who is constantly comparing the thing he is with what he might have been, but for his own folly—gnashes his teeth in the unmoved face of Fate, and takes his punishment with rage at heart, a mutineer ready to set light to the magazine, and blow the whole ship's company out of the water, notwithstanding that he himself makes one of the crew. Dr. Warton's malice was, as had been said, at present directed against the Murphies. If "friendships made in wine" are easily dissolved, so are those cemented over gin and water, and (notwithstanding that the painter had generally paid for the liquor) Dr. Warton hated Claude far more than his wife. At the Woodfords' table, however, he gave the lady the preference in the matter of vituperation. Little Evy, although she had no cause to love her Aunt Selina, sat aghast as she listened to the things that were said by her three companions against the absent Selina. She served for a topic of abuse for almost a twelvemonth, and then disappeared from the conversation with what, to Evy, seemed an extraordinary suddenness—although Uncle Ernest still indulged in vituperative soliloquy.

The child could not account for this, but it excited her wonder. Grown-up folks little know what questions they give rise to in the heart of a child-companion. It is often observed—as though there were something curious in it—that children are great observers, and it is only natural that such should be the case. Shut out, for the most part, from interchange of ideas with their elders, their sharp little wits are not inactive: there is no other employment save that of observation for them. We are apt to imagine that, after having said more than we intended in the presence of a child, we can reverse the undesirable impression by a pretence of pleasantry, or, at all events, by an explanation suitable to their capacity; but we might just as well hope to erase a sentence in black ink by writing another beneath it in red. The difference between our earnest and our jest, our mistake and its apology, is quite as marked. Evy's great eyes rolled as wonderingly at not hearing Aunt Selina abused, as they had at first when listening to the recital of her misdeeds. Perhaps some reconciliation had been effected: perhaps Aunt Clementina (whose arrival had been the signal for these protracted invectives) had forgiven her sister-in-law at last. When people were rather unwell, as when Uncle Ernest had the gout, for instance, they were cross and extra-malicious; but when they were very ill, and perhaps a little afraid of dying, they grew more charitable. And certainly Aunt Clementina was seriously indisposed. Evy would have been sorry for that, in any case, for the sweetness of her nature was such, that she used to be sorry even when Miss Selina's biliousness assumed such abnormal proportions that it prevented her from persecuting the household by confining her to her bed; but Mrs. Woodford, in her uninterested, lethargic way, was really kind to Evy. Moreover, the child remembered that she had been good to Charlie in the old times—the days that had been placed so far asunder from the present by the great divider, Death. She recollected how Mrs. Woodford had once secretly given him his dinner, when her husband and Aunt Selina would, upon very insufficient grounds, have deprived him of that meal. She remembered her patting his brown curls approvingly, on more than one occasion, and telling him to be a gentleman and a soldier like his father before him—advice which had pleased the poor boy hugely. She called to mind with what tenderness Mrs. Woodford had spoken to them both—they little know it was her farewell—on the eve of the day she left Uncle Ernest's roof, as was then thought, for ever. "You have always been my little friends," she said, "the only friends I have had in this house. When you grow up, Charlie, and marry your 'little wife' here, be sure you treat her kindly: a man that is cruel to his wife is a fool as well as a scoundrel. And you, Evy, thank your stars that your husband has no sister; you two have a chance of being all in all to one another. May you grow up gentleman and gentlewoman, as you bid fair to do. God bless you, my dears. Good-night."

There was no pathos of this sort about Mrs. Woodford now, nor indeed was there much cause for it. Uncle Ernest and she had no such quarrels as used to take place, nor, on the other hand, was there much show of affection between them. Now, however, when, as has been said, Mrs. Woodford became unwell, it seemed to Evy that her uncle was very solicitous about his wife. She rarely, if ever, came down to breakfast, and her face was pale and anxious. Dr. Warton came every day, and prescribed for her, or gave directions about her diet, or ordered or forbade her taking exercise: walking he pronounced to be bad for her; and Uncle Ernest, so far from making any objection to such a piece of extravagance (as might have been expected,) himself volunteered to procure her a pony-carriage, in which Evy often accompanied her alone in drives about the parish, although never beyond it. On these occasions, the child noticed her aunt to have grown of late quite popular (which her coldness of manner had hitherto precluded,) since every woman she stopped to speak with had a smile for her, and a glance which, though her little companion could not comprehend, certainly expressed kindness and congratulation. Mrs. Woodford spoke scarcely anthing in reply, and even her answering smiles were forced, and were replaced the instant that the necessity for their exhibition ceased, by a look of pain and care. She was more silent even than usual after any of these well meant but certainly unwelcome salutations, and the frequency of their recurrence quite embarrassed her sensitive little companion. But what was a more serious source of annoyance to Evy in these drives was the predilection of her aunt for the long winding cart-track—really quite unfit for her dapper little vehicle to traverse—that led up to Ander Nook. It was painful to her to watch the pony toiling up the ascent with his heavy load, for Mrs. Woodford never left her seat, and the absence of the child's slight figure was but small relief to the poor beast; and it was extremely distasteful to her to have to be civil to "Mary Harrison that was" at the end of the journey.

Mary Harrison, in spite of the promise we heard her give at the Wishing-gate, had become Mrs. Ripson very shortly after her uncle's death had made her mistress of the farm; and Evy, young as she was, felt all a woman's contempt for such heartless conduct. George Adams, her lost Charlie's friend and hers, had, it was well known, been very cruelly treated by this romantic but disloyal young person. He had left his profession, and returned to Sandalthwaite upon her sole account, only to find her the bride of his rival. He had taken the blow very quietly, but those who knew him best were of opinion that he did not feel it the less. His native cheerfulness and elasticity had quite disappeared; the wrestling-green knew him no more, nor did the little inn echo to his jovial song; but he worked early and late at the wad-mine, wherein he gave every satisfaction, as deputy-overlooker. His previous calling and habits of discipline well qualified him for such a post, and he was by nature accurate and diligent; but the desire of forgetting the past was the true spur that goaded him to exertion. His eagerness for work was quite painful to witness to everybody but his employer, Mr. Ernest Woodford, who devoutly wished that all his miners—a somewhat turbulent and uncertain set—might be crossed in love with the same satisfactory results.

What Aunt Clementina could have to say to the woman who had made George so miserable, Evy could not imagine; but that it was something of a private and important nature was certain. They made no scruple about leaving her alone in the great kitchen until every leaf and flower of the old oak-chest grew familiar to her gaze, while they held together their hushed talk in the little room in which old Harrison no longer murmured at his bedridden fate. She knew nothing of the subject of their conversation, but from the disconnected words which were borne now and again to her ear, she gathered that her aunt and Mary Ripson were of one mind concerning the matter in debate, but were thwarted by some third person, whose opposition they were scheming to overcome.

Had not George Adams been such a favorite with Evelyn Sefton, her tender heart would have been touched to see the change that had taken place in the woman that had deceived him, since her marriage with his rival. Her russet-red but comely face was grown quite pale and pinched; her coral lips had lost their brilliancy; her hazel eyes, though looking even larger than before, were no longer bright, and were set in sunken hollows. Her voice, in particular, had exchanged its rich full music for low and hesitating tones. That "will of her own," of which her poor old uncle used to complain, not altogether without cause, no more existed; it was swallowed up, like one of Pharaoh's serpents, by Miles Ripson's will, which was far stronger. The high-spirited village queen had become a bondswoman. Just at present, however, there was a physical cause for her ill looks; she was seriously ailing; and it was to convey comforts to her—wine, and jellies, and soup—that the head of Mrs. Woodford's pony was so often turned in the direction of Ander Nook. Such luxuries had not been known at the hill-farm at any time, and were still less likely to be found there now, when every shilling that its present tenant could lay his fingers on was spent in selfish dissipation.

Always an idle dog, Miles no sooner found himself in possession of his wife's little property, the "tying up" of which her uncle had procrastinated until it was too late, than he had begun to spend it with both hands. It was enough to make the old man turn in his grave, said the neighbors, to see how his hard-earned hoard was kicked down by this young profligate during the first twelvemonth of his married life. His humble employment as a wad-miner was of course discarded at once, but without that of a farmer being exchanged for it: Miles had played the gentleman at large, or at least the *role* which seemed to him to approximate to that sublime calling. Not content with lording it at the village inn, and standing treat to all-comers, he had extended his hospitalities to his own house, where his friends of the wrestling-ring had "rallied round him" night after night, with the ready affability of their class. For the first time, the ancient home of the thrifty Harrisons was made the scene of drunken wassail; its rafters, laden no longer with winter store, shook with drunken revelry; and its mistress found herself degraded to the position of a serving-wench at a beer-house. This state of things indeed existed no longer, since all the ready money at her husband's disposal had disappeared; but though contenting himself for the present with running up a score at the *Wrestlers' Arms*, he was said to be making arrangements for the sale of the Nook itself. No wonder, then, that Mary Ripson should look pale and haggard, and that when physical ailments were added to her other troubles, she should have become but the ghost of her former self. She accepted with thanks the good things Mrs. Woodford brought her; but either her appetite was not equal to them, or when she took them, they did her little good: on the last occasion, indeed, of a visit to Ander, Evelyn thought she had never seen her look so ill. The interview between Mrs. Ripson and her aunt had lasted longer than customary, and yet, when they joined her in the kitchen, they each seemed to have something more to say. Mrs. Woodford, as usual, on these occasions, looked dissatisfied and severe, and Mary deprecating and obsequious.

"I have gone as far as I can possibly go, mind," said the former, moving towards the door. "If the matter was in my own hands, I might perhaps accede even to this extortion; but we wives are not our own masters."

"That is true indeed, ma'am," answered Mary, with a tremor in her voice: "nobody should know that better than I."

So moved was Evy with the wretchedness of her tone, and with the piteous wreck of her beauty, that for the first time she held out her hand as she was about to follow her aunt.

"Oh, miss, God bless you for that," whispered Mary, hoarsely. "I know you despise me, but it is something to feel you do not hate me. Miss Evelin, dear"—here she hesitated, and for once to her wasted cheek returned the color that had fled it so long—"I never hear about him; I am not worthy to hear—but how is he looking? Is he happy? Is he well?"

No name was mentioned, but the child felt instantly to whom the question referred.

"He is well, Mary," returned she gravely; "but I do not think he is happy."

"Alas, alas! it is hard that God should punish us both for the fault of one. He has laid His hand heavily upon me, but I would willingly bear more to know that George's burden had been taken off. Would you tell him that, Miss Evy, please?"

"Yes, Mary I will."

Mrs. Woodford was already seated in the pony-carriage when her niece reached the door, but she exhibited no sign of impatience; on the contrary, she was staring before her as though engaged in the fashionable occupation of unravelling a double acrostic.

"You will see Dr. Warton to-night, Mrs. Ripson?" inquired she, after a long pause.

"I can't say, ma'am, I'm sure. I think it's very likely."

"I will take care he comes; for there is not, in my opinion, any time to lose: not a day, not an hour."

"To say the truth, I don't think there is, ma'am."

"You have everything you want, I believe?" continued Mrs. Woodford reflectively.

"Yes, ma'am, thank *you*, everything," returned Mrs. Ripson, with a sigh—"everything except what money can't buy."

"Ah, that we can't help, Mrs. Ripson," answered the other curtly. "Your husband is sure to be at home to-night, I suppose?"

"At some time or another, yes, ma'am."

"The later the worse, eh, Mrs. Ripson?" replied the lady, fixing her cold, blue eyes upon the speaker. "But don't you fret yourself more than you can help. All men are brutes, you may take my word for it, although I own there are women worse than any men. However, upon reflection, I think you need say nothing more to your husband about what we have been talking of to-day."

Oh, ma'am, do you really think that?" answered Mary, her own face lit up as when the vail of mist lifts for a moment, and the whole mountain-side brightens without a sun-ray.

"Yes," answered Mrs. Woodford thoughtfully. "At all events, if you find him obstinate, do not press him, so as to run any risk from his brutality. Good-bye." As the wheels rolled slowly round, she turned and added: "I hope I shall not see you to-morrow, Mary."

"What a strange thing to say!" thought Evelyn, though she made no remark. She was not at all afraid of her aunt, but that lady's manner did not invite inquiry. Nor, as they wound down through the yellowing copse, nor by the forget-me-not bordered lake, nor through the foxglove dell which formed the unfrequented carriage-drive from the main road to Dewbank Hall, did either break the autumn silence.

At the front door stood the doctor's gig, and in the hall the doctor chatting with his host. He had almost gone away, he said, without waiting for his patient, but since she had arrived, he would ask her a few questions.

"My wife looks very pale this afternoon," observed Mr. Woodford in a low and anxious tone, when the consultation was over; "is there anything to be apprehended shortly?"

"Nothing; or, at least, certainly not at present," returned the doctor, confidently; "but I don't think she must take any more drives."

"I wish that woman from Keswick had come," continued Mr. Woodford, nervously. "I had much rather have employed old Widow Ripson, and been sure of her."

"There is no cause for anxiety about the matter, my dear sir," observed the doctor. "There is plenty of time; and if it was not so, you might still set your mind at ease. You will think nothing of this sort of thing when it has happened half-a-dozen times."

"Good heavens, how you talk!" urged Mr. Woodford with irritation. "Why, this is the only time that I shall care twopence about it. Yes, I shall certainly send to Widow Ripson."

"That is quite out of the question, my dear sir. The widow is safe to be in attendance upon her daughter-in-law at the Nook, who, I think I told you, was threatened with an attack of the same nature. It is not unusual with young matrons, I assure you." And the huge doctor laughed, and swelled, and purpled, as it was his wont to do when facetious.

"Well, at all events, you won't be out of the way yourself, Warton. Now stay and dine here to-night, like a good fellow."

"I can't indeed, Mr. Woodford, because I've promised to see old Martin Welsh at Milnthwaite before dusk: a very bad case that indeed, and not a very good one for *me*. If it was not absolutely necessary, you may

depend upon it I should prefer your society over a bottle of claret, to a five-miles' journey upon a cart-track, with a half-sovereign fee at the end of it. But I'll drop in, in the evening, if I possibly can."

"Do, doctor, do. And look you," whispered the Black Squire, "if all goes well—that is with the child—and it's a boy; mind, if it's a boy, I say, I'll give you a hundred guineas."

"Well, but if it's a girl?" returned the doctor, laughing, but looking down on his companion's face with serious eagerness too. "I can't help the sex, you know. What if it's a girl?"

"Well, you'll get five guineas instead of a hundred; and a devilish dear bargain too," answered Mr. Woodford doggedly.

"Very good," returned the doctor, quietly, as he climbed up into his creaking gig. "Let us hope, for both our sakes, that it will be a boy."

CHAPTER XIII.

MILES RIPSON AT HOME.

Herbert Warton did not keep his promise of returning to Dewbank Hall after his visit to Milnthwaite, notwithstanding that his patient did not detain him long there. He returned home, had his horse put in stable, and took his way on foot to Ander Nook. There was nothing out of the usual course or difficult in the cases under his charge at present which might make a man of science and benevolence pause and ponder in his walk, though the doctor did so again and again as he climbed the well-known hill; but the fact was, he was not thinking of diagnoses. "A hundred guineas if it's a boy," muttered he; "that unexpected piece of liberality will stand me in good stead, and help to swell the prize to something worth the gaining. But if it's a girl after all—what mean scoundrels are your rich men!—in that case, the reward will not be worth the risk—not that there's much risk; and besides I must have money. What a fool that woman was to marry Murphy; and *he* to— Well, I hope it will be a boy, if only because it will serve them both right. I shall scarcely get another chance of bettering myself *that* way. Think of a man like me at forty-four, and only a parish doctor?" The wood was thick, but yet so low that a tall man like him could look above the hazel tops, and he stopped, and turned to do so; not because the sleeping valley, bathed in the radiance of the moon, had any charms for him, or the sublime solitude of the mountain summits, or the silver gleam of Ander Tarn just coming into view. The odorous breath of a thousand flowers came up to him in vain—in vain the solemn silence smote upon his ear, and strove to woo him from his sordid cares and crimes. "Curse the world and all things in it!" exclaimed the wretched man. "What have *I* done, to find myself, at my age, worse than a beggar; obliged to play the courtier to a country squire, and to become the tool of a—"

"Krake, krake, krake, krake!" cried a hoarse voice, apparently so close beside him that the doctor stopped short in his soliloquy, and turned sharply round. It was only the cornerake in the little field on the other side of the copse; but the interruption put an end for the present to his bitter thoughts, and he strode on to his destination. The long, low house lay in shadow, shut out not only from the prospect which it might have commanded, but even from sunlight and moonbeam, by a high brick wall, so that Dr. Warton could not only approach unseen, but even peer in at the open door, while those within were unconscious of his presence.

Miles Ripson was standing with his back to the great fireplace, his waistcoat unbuttoned, his neckcloth ragged, as if torn in some recent struggle, and his handsome face sullen with drink and ill-humor: his wife sat in an arm-chair shivering, partly with fear, partly with the cold of the night-air, but not daring to shut the door, which her lord and master had not chosen, or had been unable, to fasten on his entrance; by her side stood an old woman, in whose dark, well-marked features it was easy to recognize Miles's mother, who was apparently endeavoring, with quavering voice, to mitigate the violence of her son.

"What's the use of your putting yourself out so, Miles? We can't expect to get all we want in this world."

"I'll get all *I* want, or none!" exclaimed the young savage, doggedly. "It's all this whining woman's fault," continued he, pointing with his finger to the unhappy Mary—"she that does nothing but snivel and fret, when she might really make herself useful to me. Why, what do you think I want you for, you tallow-checked, red-eyed, skinny-armed—"

"Oh, Miles, Miles!" cried the unhappy girl, dashing her hands against her face, impotent despair, "how can you, can you use such cruel words!"

"Ah, you're right enough to hide your face, for I'm sure there's nothing there worth anybody's looking at.—Cruel words, indeed; take care I don't come to blows. There's many as tells me I'm a milksop, to put up with you as I do, I can tell you. Why, you're no manner of use. I've stopped your reading for some time to come—a very good fire your precious library made, that I will say—and if you get any more books, you'll be clever to find the money, that's all I say. I haven't a shilling, a sixpence, a penny-piece, and shan't have until this rotten old place and all it contains are fairly off my hands. That chest is going to Keswick to-morrow. There's a man there who says he knows some fools who will give money for such rubbish; but I daresay he won't find 'em out in a hurry."

"Oh, Miles, don't part with the chest; poor uncle took such pride in it; he was very kind to me, very—"

"And I ain't, I suppose?" sneered her husband. "Thank you, ma'am: I am not so drunk but I understand that. I think I see myself keeping that sort of lumber, when I can change it for shining gold pieces! Why, I haven't seen a guinea for these three weeks."

"And yet, Miles," interposed his mother, soothingly, "you are thinking of refusing a hundred of those same golden guineas—supposing at least things turn out as we hope—besides advantages in other respects such as it is impossible you could have looked for."

"Yes, I *am*," answered her son with emphasis. "I placed my price on the article in question, and I don't abate it, no, not by a sixpence."

"Nay, Miles," observed his wife in hesitating and humble tones, "you did agree at first, you know, to take what is offered."

"Well, and what if I did, you fool? Now I want more, that's all. When your uncle, as you talk about, saw a buyer particularly sweet about a cow or a pig, do you suppose he hadn't to pay through the nose for it?—*Promise*, do you say? Well, then, I break my promise. And I recommend *you* not to go throwing promises in *my* face, or else I'll throw something in yours as is a deal harder. What are you muttering there about? *She can't pay any more.* Yes, she *can* pay more: I tell you she can. If she hasn't got it herself, she knows where to get it."

"Don't ye take on so," whispered the old woman to Mary, who was sobbing and rocking herself to and fro; "it's bad for you to vex yourself just now. Miles don't mean half he says, bless you! He'll be as bright and winsome to-morrow morn as ever he was; it's only his way when he's got the liquor in him. He has a kind heart at bottom, has my son Miles." And the old woman threw such a look of tender and submissive devotion towards the subject of her apology as made his sullen and contemptuous face by contrast still more brutish."

"There's a pearl for a pig," muttered Dr. Warton, withdrawing himself a little from his post of espial. "This creature has more brutal obstinacy than I could have thought possible. It will be necessary, I perceive, to use that weapon earlier which I had hoped to reserve for the time—for it is sure enough to come—when extortion should be backed by menace. Oh, you stupid, heartless bully, if I had only had your handsome face, how different would my lot in life have been; nay, even if I had had a mother, fond, unselfish as yours— But there; it's no use snivelling, as you say, my free-spoken friend. I have my work to do, and I must go through with it. It will be some pleasure, at all events, to pull *you* down a peg or two. When one has dirt to go through, even though one can't expect clean shoes, it is well to get the mud off occasionally, and you shall be my scraper, Miles Ripson." Then re-approaching the house with a preparatory cough, such as the inmates could not fail to hear, Herbert Warton presented his giant form at the still open door.

"Walk in, doctor," said Miles surlily: "the missus is still about, you see, although she don't look very blooming."

"Nor, I am sorry to see, in the best of spirits," observed the visitor gravely. "You must keep up your spirits, Mary. We doctors are of little use when folks get out of heart. Why, Mrs. Ripson, I should have thought you had known better than to let your daughter be so low."

"Well, sir," answered the old lady, "we're all low, you know, at particular times, and apt to take things more serious than they are meant."

"I meant everything I said, if you mean *that*, mother," growled the young ruffian. "If a man don't say what he means in his own house, I don't know where he is to be honest."

"Honest!" replied the doctor, looking fixedly into the speaker's face; "I hope you're always honest, Miles. You brought him up honest, didn't you, Mrs. Ripson?"

"Miles has been always a good son to me, a good son," answered the old lady, with somewhat more of tremor in her tone, as it seemed to her questioner, than pathos demanded.

"I don't want nobody to defend me, mother," observed Miles doggedly, "and more especially when I'm not attacked."

"Very true, Ripson," replied the doctor quietly. "Nobody attacks you. At the same time, I will take leave to say that you have been behaving harshly to your wife here, and that, considering the circumstances—"

"You don't know nothing about the circumstances," interrupted Miles with irritation, "and therefore you just let my behavior alone. You're the doctor, and not the parson; and I warn you to keep to your own business, and leave me to mine; or," added he after a pause, during which he twice lifted his kindling eyes in wrath, only to droop them before Herbert Warton's steady gaze, "if it *is* your business as well as somebody else's, you may tell that somebody else, that in case I have the article for sale for which I have been offered a hundred guineas, my price is double the money, and not a guinea less—so there!"

"That's the last quotation in the share-market, is it, Miles Ripson? Rather a large premium upon the original stock, eh? But of course it entirely rests with you."

"Ay," replied the other with a sneer, "I think it does."

"That being the case, Miles," continued the doctor slowly, "why are you so moderate in your demands? The buyer is in sore need, and there is none to sell except yourself. True, you agreed to accept a certain sum, but you are more in want of money now—much more, if half I hear is true—and therefore, as is only natural, you break your word. Having once broken it, why confine yourself to asking double the money; why not four times, why not ten times that sum?"

"Two hundred guineas is my price, Dr. Warton, and all the talk in the world won't bring it down even to pounds."

"Your price, that is, *for the present*," returned the doctor, with emphasis. "Ah! I thought you would catch my meaning. You're a much cleverer fellow than folks give you credit for being. They say you are not a man of business, Miles Ripson, but I perceive you *are*. You look ahead. You are not a scholar, like your wife here, but you have read the fable of the goose with the golden eggs. You catch my meaning again, I see; it's quite a pleasure talking to such an intelligent listener as you."

"Pray, go on," said Miles contemptuously, as the doctor paused: "you seem to know such a deal about it, it's quite a treat to hear you."

"I am not so sure that you would think it a treat if you compel me to talk of something else that concerns you nearly, and with which I am equally well acquainted, Miles Ripson, so I will finish what seems so agreeable to you." There was a menace in the doctor's eyes curiously at variance with his light though sarcastic tone, which made the young wrestler a patient though unwilling listener to his words; and ever and anon the latter cast an uneasy look towards his wife, which his visitor translated to mean that her presence placed him at some disadvantage.

"I say that you are calculating upon this money, Miles, as the first instalment of a series of sums which you have made up your mind to extort in future years as the price of your continued secrecy. You have very much underrated the intelligence of the person with whom you have to deal, if you suppose that this has not been foreseen. It *has* been foreseen, my friend."

"Perhaps it has," answered the other with a sneer: "I don't care whether it has or not; but I know this, that it can't be helped."

"You are right; it can't be helped, Miles. Since, then, you have the game in your own hands, how can you be such an infernal fool as to throw up the cards at the very outset, by insisting upon a sum which, without such risk of discovery as it would be madness to incur, the purchaser cannot raise. One hundred guineas is all that can be given, I do assure you."

"That's a pity," returned the other carelessly, "because my price is two hundred.—We are early people in this house, doctor, and are going to bed. When we want you—at least when Mary wants you, for I don't care if I never see your face again—we'll send for you.—Come, you women, be off with you; I am going to shut up the house."

The hectoring bully was himself again. He saw in his visitor only an emissary, conscious of the weakness of his principal's mission, and deputed to make his remonstrances, indeed, but finally to pay all demands in full.

"Then you will not listen, I suppose, to the other matter to which I referred," observed the doctor coolly.

"No, I will not," answered Miles savagely; "I will hear nothing you have to say."

"You will like it still less, my friend, if you chance to hear it from other lips; however, that's your look-out.—Good-night, Mary.—Take care of her, Mrs. Ripson. Your son is somewhat obstinate about this matter, and I hope you will use your influence with him while there is yet time. The consequences, if he remains unconvinced, will, I fear, be as serious to you as to himself."

Pale as had been the widow's face ever since he had appealed to her concerning Miles, it grew still whiter while he spoke those words; her lips moved, as if to make reply, but no sound issued from them. Nor did Miles utter a syllable as he held the door, with sullen courtesy, for the departure of his guest.

Dr. Warton walked slowly through the farm-yard, slowly across the home-meadow, to the Wishing-gate, which led into the copse, then stopped and listened, the moon-beams throwing his giant form far back into the field. Presently, a door was shut with hasty violence, and a quick heavy step was heard from the direction in which he had just come.

"I thought my last words would fall on fertile ground," muttered he grimly. "The mushroom terror grows space in that rank soil; and now will I bring this cowardly scoundrel upon his bended knees."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Gen. Putnam's Spelling.

Mr. Henry Champion Deming lately gave to a Providence, R. I., military organization, an autograph letter of General Israel Putnam:—

"CAMP AT PROSPECT HIL

"*Sir* Pleas to deliver to the Barror bearof 2 Tons of Bread to some rod Islanders as they came from roxbary yesterday and nothing to eat.

"ISRAEL PUTNAM."

The foregoing scrap is a matter of curiosity, and shows that a man may have sensible ideas without much knowledge of orthography. Gen. Putnam was one of those in whose hands the sword is mightier than the pen.

☞ Here is a boy who understands preaching. He lives in Chicago, and went to church with his father, and heard the minister urge that Christians should be active for Christ. "They serve him not with breath alone, but also with the hands and the feet." On the way home, the paternal asked the lad if he understood anything in the sermon. "Oh, yes! I hear preaching now-a-days." "Well, what did you hear this morning?" "The minister said we should stop blowing and go to work."

☞ Anger adds to rebuke neither grace nor force, but love does both.

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, DEC'R 28, 1867.

NOTICE.—We do not return rejected manuscripts, unless they come from our regular correspondents. Any postage stamps sent for such return will be confiscated. We will not be responsible for the safe keeping or return of any manuscript.

The Death Shadow of The Poplars.

In our next number—the first of the new year—we design commencing this novelet, written for THE POST by Mrs. Margaret Hosmer, author of "The Morrisons," &c.

A SLEEPY CONGREGATION.

The Rev. Dr. Guthrie recently made the following assertion in an address in Scotland:—

"I remember I was once present in a congregation in the Town of Thurso, which contained as many as 2,000 people, and perhaps you will hardly believe me when I tell you that on that occasion I saw what I never saw before, and what, I am sure, you never saw, and what I hope I shall never see again—*I saw six hundred people asleep! six hundred people asleep!*

"I happened at the time to be living with Sir George Sinclair, a very excellent gentleman, who resides in the immediate neighborhood of the town. I told him what I had seen in the church. 'Oh,' said he, 'that is nothing to what I have seen myself; I have seen in almost *every pew the whole people asleep, with only here and there an exception.*'"

We should think a careful Scotch congregation would have to be very certain of the orthodoxy of their minister, before they would sleep over his sermons in that fashion, however well persuaded they might be of the perfect security of their own spiritual condition.

It is only fair to add that Dr. Guthrie imputed the general sleepiness of the congregation in question, to the bad ventilation of the church building. There is no doubt of the stupefying quality of impure air—and we suppose there is a point of impurity beyond which very few could be expected to keep awake, especially if the sermon should be somewhat dull and prosy besides.

We see it stated that Queen Victoria has had an eighteen minutes sand-glass placed in the pulpit of the church she generally attends, that being in her view, it is supposed, the proper length of an ordinary sermon. If this be the case, doubtless an eighteen minutes sermon will generally be considered the appropriate thing in the English Episcopal churches.

Well, a man can say a great deal in eighteen minutes, if he keeps to the point, and does not waste his words. He can probably give as much good advice in that length of time, as his hearers can follow all the rest of the week. Still, if a sermon be worth listening to at all, we should rather have it about double that length.

Coming back to the subject of ventilation, it is of the greatest importance in all places where it is desirable that the mind should be kept wide awake. And the building should be comfortable in all respects, or else the attention of the hearers will be distracted by their bodily discomfort or apathy from the sermon. Besides, the minister's general health, to say nothing of his throat and lungs, will not suffer half so much in a properly warmed and ventilated apartment. These truths are so obvious, that we think it needless to dwell upon them. And yet how little are they heeded in practice, even by our most enlightened congregations.

RAILROAD MURDERS.

Immediately following the terrible accident in Vermont, where a car full of workmen was run over the foundation of a bridge that was being repaired, into the stream beneath, and many of the men drowned, comes the news of a still more awful "accident" on the Lake Shore road, between Cleveland and Buffalo. We read that near Angola the rear car went over an embankment fifty feet high and caught fire. *Out of fifty passengers in it but two escaped, the rest being burned to death, and all that is left of them is a mass of blackened and charred remains!*

A later account gives the names of 25 persons—men, women and one child—burned to death, and of about fifty others more or less injured.

It is hardly probable that the names of all those who were burned can be ascertained, for we read:

A bunch of keys was found among the debris of the burned car, marked Elan Porter, Cincinnati.

An English gold lever watch, No. 1424, with the following inscription on the case:—"Presented by John Abell to A. Johnson," was also found; also two silver watches, Nos. 29,455 and 18,325, and a gold ring, with a stone marked "E. L." The set of the ring was also marked, but crumbled to pieces before it could be recognized. The ring, however, has been recognized as belonging to E. L. Mattison, of the firm of Mattison & Lawson, Auburn, New York.

The body of C. T. Metcalf, of Erie, has been recognized among the burned carcases, by a tooth on the left side of the jaw lapping over to the right.

R. C. Gibbs, of Galveston, Texas, was seen on the burned car. His trunk is at the depot, unclaimed.

John W. Chapman, of Boston, was seen on the car, and is supposed to be among the unrecognized bodies.

Another body has on a pair of spectacles, and pants of gray flannel, vest, striped shirt and white overcoat. Only nine wounded now remain at Angola.

That these "accidents," so called, are, in a majority of cases, the result of the most shameful inattention and carelessness, there can be no doubt. And we see no way to remedy them, but to hold the agents of the Companies rigidly responsible in criminal suits—and the Companies themselves responsible in civil suits—whenever they occur.

If this is not done, it will soon be only at the risk of our lives, and of being burned to death, that we can travel at all.

HONOR THE BRAVE.

A number of the friends of Major-General David Birney have contributed to the erection of an appropriate monument over his remains in Woodland Cemetery.

As the commander of a Division in the Army of the Potomac, General Birney did most excellent service through the greater portion of the war—coming home at last, worn with disease, to die. He was an admirable officer, gallant, reliable, and well versed in the duties of his arduous profession.

We stepped into the marble yard of Messrs. H. S. Tarr & Son, in Green street above Seventh, the other morning, to see the monument, recently completed. It is the usual appropriate pedestal and shaft, made of pure white marble, and bearing for inscription the name of the General, and those of the many great battles in which he participated. A fitting monument for such a life—simple, pure and unostentatious. With suitable ceremonies, military and civil, it will be placed at the proper time above his grave—witnessing to future years of the gallant soul whose body slumbers beneath, and of the admiration and warm regard of his fellow citizens.

"*Dulce et decorum, est pro patria mori.*"

NOT BAD.—We find the following in the *Public Ledger* of this city:—

"St. Louis is at present troubled with difficulties between the colored people and the street cars. Several cases are pending against car-conductors for ejecting colored people from the cars. The decisions are universally in favor of the right of the colored race to ride in the cars on the same basis as the white race."

To ride "on the same basis as the white race," is, we think, pretty good for our friends of the *Ledger*—rather better than if it had been intentional.

"EVE AND THE DEAD ABEL."

This is the title of a group of statuary by Mr. John A. Jackson, which is now being exhibited at Boston—and of which a gifted writer of that city speaks in the following glowing terms:—

"It is an original idea, masterly in conception as well as in execution. The figures are of life size. Eve has just lifted the form of her first born from the ground where she found him dead. Half kneeling she holds him in her arms and gazes into the stiffened face. The expressions of wonder and of grief blend in her look. Is this the doom which was pronounced on her transgression? Is it death which keeps these limbs so motionless? Will the heart never beat again, the lips move, the eyes open? Or is it some fearful dream, some trancelike sleep, from which he will yet arise? Her beautiful face seems to settle into hopeless grief as you watch the statue. The limp form, mute lips, and silent eyes have given her answer.

"Mr. Jackson has made himself famous by his power of enduing marble with the expression of life, and the apparent flexibility of flesh. These qualities, conspicuous in all his works, are pre-eminently displayed in this his masterpiece. We should like to see it the central object of attraction in a national gallery."

We understand that there is a probability of this group being exhibited in Philadelphia before the winter is over.

☞ A recent letter from Gallipolis, Ohio, says:—"This makes the *seventeenth* club I have sent you for THE POST, or one club for every seventeen years.

"The engraving you sent me last year is beautiful. I have some engravings. I paid five dollars for, but 'ONE OF LIFE'S HAPPY HOURS' is worth a dozen of them."

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE FRIENDSHIPS OF WOMEN. By WILLIAM ROUNSEVILLE ALGER. Published by Roberts Brothers, Boston. If we can find space, we shall give our readers some extracts from this work, the facts contained in which are very interesting—and of a kind that should not be suffered to pass into oblivion. Also for sale by G. W. Pitcher, Chestnut street, Phila.

GOLDEN TRUTHS. "A Word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." A pretty volume of selections from a number of well-known writers in prose and poetry—the general tone being religious. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; and also for sale by G. W. Pitcher, Phila.

SEEK AND FIND; OR, THE ADVENTURES OF A SMART BOY. By OLIVER OPTIC. This is another of the "Starry Flag Series," and of course interesting. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; and also for sale by G. W. Pitcher, Phila.

TOMMY HICKUP; OR, A PAIR OF BLACK EYES. By ROSA ABBOTT. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; and also for sale by G. W. Pitcher, Phila.

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE. The first number of this new Magazine presents an inviting aspect. It leads off with "Dennis Galbraith, an American Novel;" and then follows "A Welcome to Garibaldi," "The Old Slate-roof House," "The Forget-Me-Not, a Christmas Story;" "Rays from the Honeymoon," "Pre-Historic Man," "Trade and Currency," "The Cook in History," "My Destiny," "Our Ancient City," "Monthly Gossip," &c. The titles of these articles will give an idea of the character of this periodical. The political article, "The Necessity of Education in a Republic," would seem to indicate that in its political views, this monthly will lean towards that calm and wise moderation which is the distinguishing characteristic of the people of the great Middle and Central belt of states. Published by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia.

PETERSONS' CHEAP EDITION OF DICKENS FOR THE MILLION. Here we have "Oliver Twist," "Martin Chuzzlewit," and "The Pickwick Papers," good-sized type and tolerable paper, for 25 cents apiece. Enough said.

LANDRETH'S RURAL REGISTER AND ALMANAC FOR 1868. Published annually for Gratuitous Distribution. Printed by McCalla & Stavely, No. 237 Dock street, Philada. This Register, published by our famous seedsmen, Landreth & Son, contains a large amount of interesting agricultural and horticultural information—and is quite prettily got up.

JUDGE NOT; OR, HESTER POWERS' GIRLHOOD. By Mrs. EDWIN SHEPPARD. Published by Loring, Boston; and also for sale by G. W. Pitcher, Phila.

MR. TOWNSEND'S WALK AND CONVERSATION WITH HIS CHILDREN. Published by the Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Philadelphia.

OUR MUTUAL FRIEND. By CHARLES DICKENS. People's Edition. Published by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philada.

☞ It is stated that three foolish young men in Berlin have died from attempt to pass seven days and seven nights without sleep.

☞ A housekeeper in Ohio recently disposed some arsenic to poison the rats. The rats disposed it with their feet over some food in a closet, and the whole family were made seriously ill.

☞ It is stated that when Grant went to Washington to receive his appointment as Lieutenant General, he stated to Mr. Lincoln his plan, which was to occupy with the army of the Potomac the main rebel army in Virginia, while Sherman destroyed the Confederacy. Mr. Lincoln replied: "I see; you will hold the legs, while Sherman skins."

☞ An English magazine has been studying the laws of moustache dyeing. It states that a moustache may be made several shades darker in color by tying a cabbage leaf on it on retiring at night. By repetition, the hair may thus be made as dark as is desired. Cabbage heads, it is feared, will flourish among the readers of that magazine.

☞ Warnings to architects and builders—The numerous recent fires from defective flues.

☞ It was of course an Irishman who said, "The most eloquent feature in a dog's face is his tail."

The Algerian Widow.

There was a daring French traveller who asserted not many years ago that Scotch ladies wore shoes and stockings only in deference to public opinion. Without going to this wild extreme, we may amuse ourselves by reflecting how very different an outward appearance the world would wear if that barrier were for the time removed. How many of us would pass to-morrow as they will now pass it, if public opinion were extinguished? How many would subscribe to charities if all charities became anonymous? How many would fast if nobody knew it? How many would attend public dinners, or meetings for speech-making, or lectures, or social science congresses, or a hundred more of those grand "functions" which render life wearisome, which we all know render it wearisome, but which the empire of conventionalities impose on us? Let any one of us merely put to himself, deliberately, this solemn question: If Mrs. Grundy were to die to-night, and I were made absolutely certain of the fact, in how many respects would my conduct be different to-morrow from that which I shall have to adopt under the pressure of her presence?

We owe an apology to our readers for troubling them with such common-place suggestions, but we have been led to it from reflecting on one of those little narratives, whether true stories or merely apologues, which our French neighbors are so fond of concocting about the manners and customs of their very un-French fellow-citizens, the Algerians. And we must make our excuse further to M. Duvernois for borrowing, and freely "accommodating" to our purpose, a slight tale exceedingly well told by himself.

Those who form their ideas of female life among the Moslem from the well-known habits of Turks and Persians, and other dwellers in towns, are not aware of the numerous exceptions which exist to the general rule. Under the tents of the Arab and other wandering races, and not least where these have come in contact with European civilization or corruption, the women often lead lives of far greater freedom; they are admitted far more to companionship and equality with men, and they even occasionally approach the "fast" style of modern times, as far as the desert may compete with the boulevards. Such was the type—but we say it with all respect for her—of the heroine of our tale, the fair Ayesha. She belonged to a somewhat "scratch" tribe in the south of Algeria, which does not bear a very high character for purity of blood, nor (to speak the truth) for the probity of its men or the prudery of its women;—the Welled-el-Blank we will call it, hoping to offend no susceptibilities thereby. Ayesha was the daughter of a wealthy Caid of the tribe; he wedded her, a mere child, to a wealthy friend, who died immediately, and she became a child-widow of ample property. Such attractions would have been alone sufficient to engage in her pursuit a host of admirers; but Ayesha, had, besides, the finest pair of eyes on this side the Sahara, was clever, and business-like, could sing the dreariest of Arab songs in the most approved melancholy style, and tell no end of long stories to amuse the harem or the encampment by night. Her numerous admirers were driven to distraction by her coldness; divers among them began to meditate on the old-fashioned method of abduction, and were only restrained from it by a wholesome dread of the French executive. But Ayesha went her way, indifferent and independent. She preferred a life of freedom, *sans peur*, and, for aught we know, *sans reproache*, to the house or tent of a master.

Ayesha soon became acquainted with the doughty feats of many a wooer, as recounted by themselves,—*how* many cavaliers one had unhorsed, how many lions another had slain; nor was she unfamiliar with the merits of the steeds of one chief of her tribe, the camels of another, the coined money amassed by a third, all of which she was assured every day were entirely at her disposal, together with their owners. This suitor had no wife, and was ready to vow that she should remain for life sole mistress of his harem. That suitor had three wives, and would engage that all three should be placed at her feet as servants or dependents. Ayesha's imagination seemed little affected by vaunts of prowess or of opulence, or by the most magnificent of promises. But among those who crowded round her whenever she gave opportunity for approach, there was one youth whom she learnt to distinguish from the rest, even by the eccentricity of his demeanor. For if the others spoke of themselves too much, Sidi Abdallah never spoke at all. He only gazed at her incessantly with those dark, passionate eyes. Sidi Abdallah had lived a good deal with Europeans, and acquired a certain outward polish by no means common among his kindred. And at the same time (by an unusual combination) he was very religious and a strict observer of the commands of the Prophet, which procured him a certain amount of respect, though the Beni Welled-el-Blank were apt to be of a slightly free-thinking turn. But, with these merits, he was bashful and reserved to a distressing extent. Ayesha could, not fail to detect his silent but ardent passion. She went thereupon through the usual stages of emotion. At first she voted him a fool, then got interested, then piqued, and at last found herself unwilling, but irretrievably, in love with him. She gave him every opportunity, but speak he would not. To propose to him was as impossible—to get him to propose as difficult a task—as to a young lady embarrassed in all the artificial coils of French or British education.

At last she took a resolution. She contrived to let it be known that she had determined on changing her condition, but that she wished to do it with all the deliberation which so important a step required. She was open to negotiation. And Heaven knows the amount of advantageous offers which now poured in upon her, from all quarters except that one to which alone her desires tended. She would none of them. She would be gained by no man who would not become absolutely hers, and show it by some deed of unhesitating self-devotion which could neither be cavilled at nor surpassed. What could she ask, they assured her, which they were not, one and all, ready a thousand times to perform?

She managed to assemble them together "The man who would have me," she said,—and there was a furtive trembling glance in the direction of Sidi Abdallah,—"must prize me above the joys of this world and the hopes of the next, and must give me, before the eyes of all the world, incontrovertible proof of it. To-morrow is the last day of the fast of Ramafan. You all know that whoever violates that fast cannot enter Paradise. I will be here to-morrow in this market place with a plate of kouskousoo, dressed by myself. To him who, in the same public place, will eat a spoonful of it, will I give myself in marriage, and to none other."

There was solemn commotion among beards, and staring of eyes, at the proposal. She is mad, said the more considerate; a supposition which, according to Arab notions, did not diminish their respect for her. She is the daughter of Sheitan, said another, and he who tastes that kouskousoo will need a long spoon to sup with her father. She is suborned by the Christians to seduce the children of the Prophet to idolatry, suggested an illnatured devotee. But those whom the proposal more especially regarded received it with much embarrassment. She is a Houri, no doubt, but to renounce all the other Houris for her, and that in so downright and vulgar a fashion—? If she had only asked me to come into her tent and take a spoonful in a quiet way, the thing might have been worth considering; but here, before all the curious people of the tribe,—what would Mrs. Grundy say? For he who imagines that he can escape from that tremendous female by fleeing to the desert is greatly mistaken. Her influence in an oasis of the Sahara is every bit as powerful as in an English country town. And there were even emirs there, unless we are mistaken, who dreaded Johannm, in their hearts, less than they did Mrs. Grundy.

One and all quietly determined to decline the proffered test, if actually driven to it. Nevertheless, they all came to see if any one else was daring enough to accept it. And Sidi Abdallah was there, with more intense expression in those yearning eyes of his than ever. It was midday. Ayesha came forward, with the bowl and the spoon. There was no need to repeat the conditions. One after the other shuffled out of the way from the abominable thing. She proffered it to Abdallah, and then was turning away, her heart overflowing, when he suddenly sprang forward, as if mastered by a force superior to himself, and grasped at the spoon. "Stop!" said Ayesha, gently, but with suppressed triumph. "Enough has been done—I never meant you to eat it. I only wanted to prove whether there was one in all the world who loved me so passionately that he would give himself, soul and body, to me, and that not clandestinely, but in the sight of every man, in order that I might learn to whom I could safely give myself in requital. Come to supper with me after sunset, when the fast is over, and we will eat the kouskousoo together."

So he came, and they ate the kouskousoo; and in a day or two they were married before the Cadi of Medeah.

The Thimble.

The name of this little instrument is said to have been derived from "thumb bell," being at first thumble, and afterwards thimble. It is of Dutch invention, and was brought to England about the year 1695, by John Lofting, who commenced its manufacture at Islington, near London, and pursued it with great profit and success. Formerly, iron and brass were used; but latterly, steel, silver, and gold have taken their places. In the ordinary manufacture, thin plates of metal are introduced into a die, and then punched into shape. In Paris, gold thimbles are manufactured to a large extent. Thin sheets of sheet iron are cut into discs of about two inches diameter. These, being heated red hot, are struck with a punch into a number of holes, gradually increasing in depth to give them the proper shape. The thimble is then trimmed, polished, and indented around its outer surface with a number of little holes, by means of a small wheel. It is then converted into steel by the cementation process, tempered, scoured, and brought to a blue color. A thin sheet of gold is then introduced into the interior, and fastened to the steel by means of a polished steel mandril. Gold leaf is then applied to the outside, and attached to it by pressure, the edges being fastened in a small groove made to receive them. The thimble is then ready for use. Those made in this manner do not wear out, as so many ordinary gold thimbles do, but will last for years. The gold coating, if cut away by the needles, may be easily replaced; but the steel is of an excellent quality, and very durable.

Christmas Trees.

These are a beautiful importation from Germany. The custom of having them is now wide spread, even in Puritan New England. What a forest of brilliantly bedecked evergreen would be visible were all the fire that are to be laden and lighted this year brought together; and what a story that forest would tell of busy hands, and buzzing consultations; of secrets it was hard to keep; of restless expectations and wistful looks; of the joy of givers and the gladness of receivers; of, in a word, the merry sympathy of warm affection expressing itself in tasteful symbols. It is instructive and increases faith in the good in human nature merely to imagine all this. The custom of decorating houses and churches with evergreens is derived from ancient Druid practices. The holly, ivy, rosemary, bays, laurel, and mistletoe were the favorite trimmings, and never removed till Candlemas. Chaplets of these were worn about the head, and "kissing under the rose" and "whispering under the mistletoe" are allusions to this practice. But the old customs in England have lost their primitive character, the gambols and carols are nearly gone by, family reunions and evergreen decorations being nearly all that remain of the old festivities.

"All flesh is grass," at least so say
The writings of the sages:
If this be so, then the hay day
Of life, 'tis clear, old age is.

☞ Queen Victoria is growing very corpulent.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

CONGRESS.—In the U. S. Senate on the 16th, a bill was reported from the Finance Committee for funding the national debt and for the conversion of the notes of the United States. Laid over. On the 17th, a memorial from Arkansas, asking increased military protection, was presented and referred.

In the House, the bill declaring that no officer of the army, dismissed or cashiered, should be restored except by reappointment, confirmed by the Senate, was reported back from the Committee on Military Affairs and passed.

Mr. Stevens's Reconstruction bill, providing for the adoption of the Southern Constitutions by a majority of those voting, was brought before the House, and, after some discussion, passed finally by a strict party vote.

THE MANUFACTURERS' CONVENTION.—The Manufacturers' Convention met at Cleveland, Ohio, on the 18th. A resolution was adopted declaring the purpose of the Convention to be the securing the repeal of the taxes on manufactures and productions, except luxuries, and the changing of the revenue assessment and collection system.

ALABAMA.—In the Alabama Convention an ordinance has been presented requiring all state offices to be vacated after the first of January, until filled by General Pope. A popular vote is advised by the Convention.

TERRIBLE ACCIDENT.—A terrible disaster occurred on the Lake Shore railroad on the 18th inst. Two cars of a train going from Cleveland to Buffalo fell down an embankment, and one of the cars caught fire. Fifty persons were burned to death.

EARTHQUAKES.—At three o'clock on the morning of the 18th, a shock of earthquake was felt in various portions of New York state, New England and the Canadas. No damage is reported.

Foreign Intelligence.

GREAT BRITAIN.—Another attempt was made on the 18th to blow up one of the city prisons. Powder was placed under the wall of the Milbank jail, in which a number of Fenians are confined. The preparations were all completed, and the fire had been lighted by the conspirators without attracting attention; but, fortunately, owing to some defect in the arrangements, the powder did not explode, and the plot was discovered before the attempt to carry it out could be renewed. No arrests have been made, and no clew has yet been obtained to the guilty parties.

Arms and ammunition, secreted by the Fenians, have been discovered and seized by the police in several places in England.

Burke, the Fenian, to rescue whom the Clerkenwell Prison wall was blown down, was examined by the London police on Saturday. Burke denied all knowledge of the cause of the explosion.

The tone of the London press is very bitter towards the Fenians.

In London, on the 20th, the alarm caused by the recent Fenian outrages still continued. The magistrates were still swearing in special policemen, the guards around the prisons strengthened, and the warehouses in the city carefully watched during the night. Troops were suddenly ordered to Portsmouth and left in a special train. In view of the recent outrages committed by the Fenians, and to prevent by summary measures their repetition, the Cabinet has determined to ask Parliament to suspend the writ of habeas corpus in England.

ITALY.—Menebrea has replied to the attacks made upon the Government by the Liberal party in Parliament. In the course of his speech he said Italy would, sooner or later, possess Rome, but that end would be accomplished, not by arms, but by moral force. Ratazzi followed in a speech in opposition to the Chief Minister, saying, the popular vote in Naples and other cities of Italy showed that the nation demanded a different policy.

FRANCE.—The Moniteur of the 18th, publishes a circular by the Prefect of Police, placing the press under a more rigorous censorship.

The General Conference on the Roman question has been abandoned, the leading European Governments having probably declined to take part in it.

AUSTRIA.—The new Constitution, after a long debate, has been adopted by the Upper House of the Reichsrath.

DENMARK.—The negotiations between the Cabinets of Berlin and Copenhagen in regard to Schleswig, have been resumed with increased activity. Important notes have been exchanged.

TURKEY.—The Great Powers have formally requested the Sultan to make the navigation of the Dardanelles free to the shipping of all nations.

MEXICO.—Advices from Mexico state that Senor Romero is about to return to Washington as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States. Mexico will also send diplomatic agents to the South American Republics. The English Legation and Consuls have been withdrawn.

HAYTI.—Hayti advices confirm the report of the assassination of Monte. The revolution was increasing. President Cobral, of St. Domingo, was marching with an army against Hayti, under pretence of avenging the death of Monte, but in reality to gain possession of the whole island.

SOUTH AMERICA.—The attempt is again being made to confederate into a single nation the South American Republics on the Pacific slope of the Andes. Peru has taken the initiative, and has addressed a circular upon the subject to the Government of Chili, Bolivia and Equador. These four nations, which, it is proposed, shall form the new Republic, have 2,900 miles of sea coast, contain 6,800,000 inhabitants, and cover 1,185,000 square miles of territory.

THE ABYSSINIAN EXPEDITION.—A despatch from Abyssinia, says a report from the interior had reached the British expedition, that King Theodore had set fire to and destroyed Debna Tabor, one of his principal cities.

☞ The author of a novel just out, wishing to say that her heroine opened her mouth, thus expresses herself: "the pretty coral door-keepers of her words gave way, and a low, mocking laugh ran out from them."

The Ocean Bottom.

Mr. Green, the famous diver, tells singular stories of his adventures, when making search in the deep waters of the ocean. He gives some new sketches of what he saw at the "Silver Bank," near Hayti. "The banks of coral on which my divings were made are about forty miles in length, and from ten to twenty in breadth. On this bank of coral is presented to the diver one of the most beautiful and sublime scenes the eye ever beheld. The water varies from ten to one hundred feet in depth, and so clear that the diver can see from two to three hundred feet when submerged, with but little obstruction to the sight.

"The bottom of the ocean, in many places, is as smooth as a marble floor; in others it is studded with coral columns, from ten to one hundred feet in height, and from one to eighty feet in diameter. The tops of these more lofty support a myriad of pyramidal pendants, each forming a myriad more, giving reality to the imaginary abode of some water-nymph. In other places the pendants form arch after arch, and, as the diver stands on the bottom of the ocean, and gazes through in the deep winding avenues, he finds that they fill him with as sacred an awe as if he were in some old cathedral which had long been buried beneath old ocean's wave. Here and there the coral extends even to the surface of the water, as if the loftier columns were towers belonging to those stately temples that are now in ruins.

"There were countless varieties of diminutive trees, shrubs and plants in every crevice of the corals where water had deposited the earth. They were all of a faint hue, owing to the pale light they received, although of every shade, and entirely different from plants that I am familiar with that vegetate upon dry land. One in particular attracted my attention; it resembled a sea-fan of immense size, of variegated colors and the most brilliant hue. The fish which inhabit these 'Silver Banks' I found as different in kind as the scenery was varied. They were of all forms, colors and sizes—from the symmetrical goby to the globe-like sunfish; from the dullest hue to the changeable dolphin; from the spots of the leopard to the hues of the sunbeam; from the harmless minnow to the voracious shark.

"Some had heads like squirrels, others like cats and dogs, some of small size resembled the bull-terrier. Some darted through the water like meteors, while others could scarcely be seen to move.

"To enumerate and explain all the various kinds of fish I beheld while diving on these banks would, were I enough of a naturalist so to do, require more than my limits allow, for I am convinced that most of the kinds of fish which inhabit the tropical seas can be found there. The sun fish, star fish, white shark and blue or shovel-nose shark were often seen.

"There were also fish which resembled plants, and remained as fixed in their position as a shrub; the only power they possessed was to open and shut when in danger. Some of them resembled the rose when in full bloom, and were of all hues. There were the ribbon fish, from four or five inches to three feet in length; their eyes are very large and protrude like those of a frog.

"Another fish is spotted like a leopard, from three to ten feet in length. They build their houses like beavers, in which they spawn, and the male or female watches the egg until it hatches. I saw many specimens of the green turtle, some five feet long, which I should think would weigh from 400 to 500 pounds."

A Winter Breakfast.

The following is from Mr. and Mrs. Lyman's "Philosophy of Housekeeping":—

In northern climates, and in winter, food is taken for the purpose of supplying the animal warmth, as well as for strength; and this should be kept in view by the housewife when she prepares her breakfast. The oils and fats are the substances that are richest in carbon, the element required in lung-combustion; and the problem for the cook and purveyor is how to introduce these substances into the stomach in such a way as not to impede digestion. The mode of blending the animal oils with various other substances that come on the table requires special skill and attention on the part of the housewife. Butter is the animal oil which is most readily assimilated in the stomach. The smoking of hams, and the sage and other seasoning used in making sausages, are found to have some effect, the reason of which is not understood, in making the fat of pork digestible and wholesome.

Let us now take a bill of fare for breakfast in winter, and see how it meets the demands of the system in that season:

Fried Sausages, with Potatoes;
Cold boiled Tongue;
Indian Mush, fried;
Buckwheat Batter Cakes;
Pickled Cucumbers.

The sausages yield an abundance of animal fat, that, combined with the potato, which is almost wholly starch, is taken into the stomach in a form to be easily attacked by its juices. The lean parts of the meat in the sausage, which should exceed the fat parts by one-half, give muscle-making elements. The tongue is wholly muscular and flesh-producing. The Indian mush, fried, is heat-producing, but in a lower degree than the fat of the sausage. It contains gluten, which affords the elements of muscle. The buckwheat batter cakes are also rich in carbon, but poor in nitrogen; this is the reason why they are generally eaten in winter; and, as they give but little strength, are ill suited to the laborer, and should be combined with substances rich in plastic material. The acid, a little of which should accompany every meal, especially one so rich in carbonized materials as this, is supplied by the cucumber and vinegar.

[NOTE. *We think that sausages should not be eaten regularly, or even frequently, except by persons who lead an active life in the open air. Of course they should not be eaten at all, unless you have good evidence that they are properly made.—Ed. Sat. Eve. Post.*]

☞ It is confidently reported in diplomatic circles that Victor Hugo, when asked if he could tell the origin of the Bonaparte family, replied, "of Cors-I-can."

CHRISTMAS.

"Some say that ever, 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrate,
The bird of dawning singeth all night long;
And then, they say, no spirit walks abroad;
The nights are wholesome, then no planets strike;
No fairy takes, no witch hath power to charm,
So hallowed and so gracious is the time."
—*Shakspeare.*

"Those who at Christmas do repine,
And would fain hence dispatch him,
May they with old Duke Humphrey dine,
Or else may 'Squire Ketch catch them."
—*Old Song.*

☞ HIGH MORAL GROUND.—In one of the courts a few days since, a man was testifying regarding his connection with a case where offers had been made to him to club a man, but he declined the job. With great solemnity, the counsel asked, as if anticipating a high moral reason for his refusal, why the witness did not commit the assault. "Well, sir," was the candid reply, "I'm a little lame, and I was afraid the police would catch me."

R. R. R.—RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.—To be used on all occasions of pain or sudden sickness. Immediate relief and consequent cure for the ailments and diseases prescribed, is what the RELIEF guarantees, to perform. Its motto is plain and systematic: *It will surely cure!* There is no other remedy, no other LINIMENT, no kind of PAIN-KILLER, that will check pain so suddenly and so satisfactorily as RADWAY'S READY RELIEF. It has been thoroughly tested in the workshop and in the field, in the counting-room and at the forge, among civilians and soldiers, in the parlor and in the hospital, throughout all the varied climes of the earth, and one general verdict has come home: "*The moment Radway's Ready Relief is applied externally, or taken inwardly according to directions, PAIN, from whatever cause, ceases to exist!*" Use no other kind for SPRAINS, or BURNS, or SCALDS, or CUTS, CRAMPS, BRUISES, or STRAINS. It is excellent for CHILBLAINS, MOSQUITO BITES, also STINGS OF POISONOUS INSECTS. It is unparalleled for SUN STROKES, APOPLEXY, RHEUMATISM, TOOTHACHE, TIC DOLOUREUX, INFLAMMATION OF THE STOMACH, BOWELS, KIDNEYS, &c. Good for almost everything. No family should be without it. Follow directions and a speedy cure will be effected. Sold by Druggists. Price 50 cents per bottle. mar8-eowtf

HEALTH, the poor man's riches, the rich man's bliss is found in AYER'S MEDICINES, after a fruitless search among other remedies. A word to the wise is sufficient. decs-2t

HOLLOWAY'S OINTMENT.—Erysipelas and all inflammatory diseases yield to a diligent use of this powerful preparation. In the foot, hand and neck, their approach should be checked at once—if suppuration ensues, danger is imminent, and the knife cannot be employed without jeopardizing life. This Ointment will remove the disorder, without cutting, pain or peril.

FOR RENEWING the health of the nervous system, when it is in a debilitated condition from the effects of NEURALGIA NERVE-ACHE or any nervous complaint, DR. TURNER'S TIC-DOULOUREUX or UNIVERSAL NEURALGIA PILL will be found the most effective medicine that can be administered. The *nerve fluid* becoming thoroughly *toned* and stimulated by its agency. Apothecaries have this medicine.

MARRIAGES.

☞ Marriage notices must always be accompanied by a responsible name.

On the 12th instant, by the Rev. T. P. Stevenson, Mr. JOHN WILSON to Miss ELIZABETH PATTERSON, both of this city.

On the 3d of Oct., by the Rev. Wm. H. Elliot, Mr. THOMAS WOODROFFE to Miss KATE HUNTER, both of this city.

On the 6th instant, by the Wm. O. Johnstone, Mr. WILLIAM CANN, of Manayunk, to Miss SUSAN JOHNSON, of this city.

On the 12th instant, by the Rev. Saml. Durborow, Mr. SAMUEL H. ILLMAN to Miss ANNIE R. LLOYD, both of this city.

On the 13th instant, by the Rev. William T. Eva, Mr. JAMES HOFFMAN to Miss ANNA B. WHILT, daughter of Mr. James G. Whilt.

On the 14th instant, by the Rev. M. D. Kurtz, Mr. Mr. GEORGE V. RHINEHART to Miss PRISCILLA BOWEN, both of this city.

DEATHS.

☞ Notices of Deaths must always be accompanied by a responsible name.

On the 18th instant, HOOD SIMPSON, in his 73d year.

On the 17th instant, MARY B. JUSTICE, in her 25th year.

On the 16th instant, CHARLES P. CARRE, aged 49 years.

On the 16th instant, REBECCA H. DORRUS, in her 71st year.

On the 16th instant, WILLIAM BLACKBURN, in his 71st year.

On the 15th instant, DAVID H. SPARKS, aged 27 years.

On the 15th instant, CHARLES H. BRADLEY, in his 23d year.

On the 14th instant, CAROLINE, wife of Wm. H. Abel, in her 36th year.

On the 12th instant, MRS. CAROLINE LANCASTER, in her 64th year.

THE MARKETS.

FLOUR—The market has been very dull. About 5000 bbls sold in lots, to the retailers and bakers, at from $7,00@8,25 for superfine; $8,50@9,25 for extra; $9,75@11 for low grade and fancy Northwest extra family; $10,50@12 for Penna and Ohio family, and $12,50@14 ₩ bbl for fancy brands, according to quality. Rye Flour sells at $8,50@8,75 ₩ bbl.

GRAIN—Prime Wheat continues scarce and in demand: 5000 bus common red sold at $2,25@2,35; 4000 bus fair to good do at $2,40@2,50; 3000 bus prime at $2,52@2,55, and 2000 bus of choice at $2,60. White ranges from $2,70@2,85 ₩ bus, according to quality. Rye—2200 bus of Penna sold at $1,72@1,73 ₩ bus. Corn—4000 bus of prime old yellow sold at $1,40; 18,000 bus of new Penna and Delaware yellow at $1,10@1,30, as to condition; 20,000 bus of new western mixed $1,20@1,22, and 5000 bus of choice dry do at $1,25. Oats—40,000 bus sold at 70@73c ₩ bus, the latter rate for prime Penna.

PROVISIONS—The market continues dull. Sales of Pork at $21,50 for old, and $22,50 for new; $19,50 for prime do; and $18 for prime. Mess Beef, City packed, sells at $21@22. Bacon—Sales of Hams at 16@17c; Sides are taken, in lots, at 14½@15c, and Shoulders at 11½@12c. Green Meats—Sales of pickled Hams at 12@13½c, and Shoulders, in salt, at 9½c. Lard—Sales in tes and bbls, at 12@13½c, and kegs at 13½@14c. Butter—Sales of old at 11@20c; new at 14@25c, and roll at 100@40c. Cheese—Sales at 13@16c. Eggs sell at 28@30c ₩ doz.

PHILADELPHIA CATTLE MARKETS.

The supply of Beef Cattle during the past week amounted to about 5000 head. The prices realized from 9@10 cts ₩ lb. 200 Cows brought from $20 to 75 ₩ head. Sheep—6000 head were disposed of at from 4½@6 cts ₩ lb. 4000 Hogs sold at from $10,00 to 13,50 ₩ 100 lbs.

PROSPECTUS FOR 1868.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

NEUTRAL IN POLITICS.

New and Splendid Premium Engraving.

GEMS OF NATIVE AND FOREIGN LITERATURE.

The proprietors of "the oldest and best of the weeklies" offer unequalled inducements to those who incur the labor of making up clubs, as well as to those who remit, as single subscribers, the full subscription price.

"WASHINGTON AT MOUNT VERNON."

For our Premium Engraving this year we shall give the above splendid portrait of Washington, engraved by the distinguished artist, H. Wright Smith, from the celebrated picture by Thomas Hicks, N. A. This is a full length portrait, with Mount Vernon in the background, and is thirty inches long by twenty one inches wide. No American house should be without a portrait of "The Father of his Country." This engraving, (or one of "Edward Everett in his Library," or one of last year's premiums, "One of Life's Happy Hours," if preferred) *will be sent gratis as a Premium (postage paid) to every full ($2.50) subscriber, and also to every person sending a club!*

The contents of THE POST shall consist, as here-of-re, of the very best original and selected matter that can be procured. The following *original* serial stories are already on hand:—

THE DEATH SHADOW OF THE POPLARS.

By MRS. MARGARET HOSMER, author of "The Morrisons," &c.

TRYING THE WORLD.

By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS, author of "In Trust," &c.

ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON.

By ELIZABETH PRESCOTT, author of "How a Woman Had Her Way," &c.

Besides our original contributions, long and short, we also select in STORIES, SKETCHES, ESSAYS, &c.,

THE GEMS OF THE ENGLISH MAGAZINES;

And also give the NEWS OF THE WEEK, AGRICULTURAL ARTICLES, POETRY, WIT AND HUMOR, RIDDLES RECEIPTS, CLIPPINGS, THE MARKETS, &c., &c.

NEUTRAL IN POLITICS.

THE POST is exclusively devoted to Literature, and therefore does not discuss political or sectarian questions. It is a common ground, where all can meet in harmony, without regard to their views upon the political or sectarian questions of the day.

LIST OF PREMIUMS.

No. 1.	For 30 subscribers at	$2.50	apiece—	a Wheeler & Wilson Sewing Machine, worth		$55.00
" 2.	For 4	"	" 2.50	"	a Propeller Pencil, gold mounted, worth	5.00
					or a Set of Chess Men, worth	3.00
" 3.	For 8	"	" 2.50	"	one dozen Silver Plated Teaspoons, worth	7.00
					or half dozen Silver Plated Tablespoons, worth	7.00
					or half dozen Silver Plated Forks, worth	7.00
					or a Universal Clothes Wringer, worth	10.00
					or a Silver Plated Castor, worth	10.00
					or a Set of Croquet maple, painted, worth	10.00
No. 4.	For 10 subscribers at	$2.50	apiece—	a Silver Plated Cake Basket, worth		12.00
					or a Silver Plated Ice Pitcher, worth	12.00
					or a Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, worth	12.00
" 5.	For 12	"	" 2.50	"	a Doty's Washing Machine, worth	14.00
" 6.	For 16	"	" 2.50	"	a Fine Silver Watch, worth	30.00
" 7.	For 24	"	" 2.50	"	a Fine Double Barrel Gun, worth	35.00
" 8.	For 24	"	" 2.50	"	a Fine Silver Watch, worth	30.00
" 9.	For 30	"	" 2.50	"	an Allen's Patent Breech Loading Rifle, worth	35.00
" 10.	For 40	"	" 2.50	"	a Silver Plated Tea Set, including Coffee Pot, worth	50.00
					or one of Spencer's Repeating Rifles, with Globe and Peep sight, &c., worth	55.00
" 11.	For 50	"	" 2.50	"	a Lady's Fine Gold Watch, worth	75.00
" 12.	For 50	"	" 2.50	"	Appleton's American Cyclopædia, 16 vols., worth	80.00
" 13.	For 50	"	" 2.50	"	a First Quality Melodeon (4 octaves) worth	90.00
" 14.	For 75	"	" 2.50	"	a First Quality Parlor Organ (4 octaves), worth	110.00

SPLENDID OFFER OF BOOKS.

POSTAGE PREPAID BY US.

As some may be desirous of obtaining Books instead of the above Premiums, we make this additional offer:—

We will furnish any Books on T. B. Peterson & Bros.' List of Publications, *bound in paper, or in cloth, and postage prepaid*, on the following terms:—For 2 new subscribers, at $2.50 apiece, $1.50 worth of Books; for 4 subscribers, at $2.50 apiece, $3.00 worth of Books; for 8 subscribers, at $2.50 apiece, $7.00 worth of Books; for 16 subscribers, at $2.50 apiece, $15.00 worth of Books; for 30 subscribers, at $2.50 apiece, $30.00 worth of Books; and for 50 subscribers at $2.50 apiece, $55.00 worth of Books.

The person entitled to a Premium will be allowed to select such books (bound in cloth or paper) as he may desire, out of T. B. Peterson & Bros.' publications—among which are the works of Sir Walter Scott, Charles Dickens, Mrs. Henry Wood, Miss Bremer, Charles Lever, Captain Marryatt, Mrs. Lee Hentz, Mrs. Stephens, Mrs. Southworth, Dumas, Emerson Bennett, Wilkie Collins, G. P. R. James, Miss Pardoe, T. S. Arthur, Prof. Liebig, &c., &c. Also, nine different Cook Books.

T. B. Peterson & Bros.' Catalogue, with the retail prices, will be sent to any one on the receipt of a three cent stamp. The postage on these books will be *prepaid*. All the other Premiums (except the engravings) are sent at the expense of the person getting them.

REMARKS

☞ The lists may be made up for The Post exclusively, or the Lady's Friend exclusively, or partly or one and partly the other, as is desired.

☞ REMEMBER—each subscriber, on a Premium list, is to receive *in addition to his paper or magazine*, a copy of either of the large and beautiful Premium Steel Engravings, as he may prefer:—"WASHINGTON AT MOUNT VERNON," "EDWARD EVERETT IN HIS LIBRARY," or "ONE OF LIFE'S HAPPY HOURS." The regular club subscribers do not receive an engraving, unless they send one dollar extra for it.

Subscriptions should be remitted as fast as obtained, that the subscribers may receive their papers, magazines and engraving at once. Both old and new subscribers may be counted in the lists. The papers or magazines will be sent to different post-offices when desired.

The canvasser for a list for Premiums would do well to take with him a copy of THE POST, a copy of THE LADY'S FRIEND, and one of the Premium Engraving. He can get these, either by subscribing for the paper or magazine for a year, or by inclosing us *one dollar*, for which sum we will send a copy of all three to those desirous of making up lists, but to those only. The paper and magazine, without the engraving, will be sent for twenty cents.

The Sewing Machine offered is the Wheeler & Wilson No. 3 Machine, price $55. We will also send this Machine on the old terms of twenty subscribers and sixty dollars, (that is, ten dollars *in addition* to the amount of the subscription price) if desired. And we will send any of the higher priced Wheeler & Wilson's Machines, if the difference in price is also remitted.

Everything offered in our list of Premiums is guaranteed to be an excellent article. The valuation is simply the usual retail price of the article in Philadelphia and New York. By means of purchasing at the best sources, and at wholesale prices, and giving advertising in return, we are enabled to offer these splendid inducements. Our only object is to increase our circulation—giving those who help us to do this, the benefit of the Premiums.

The articles will be sent by express, or as ordered. Nothing will be charged for packing or boxing. The Freight, however, must be paid by the receiver of the Premium.

REMITTANCES.—In remitting, name at the top of your letter, your post-office, county, and state. If possible, procure a post-office order on Philadelphia. If a post office order cannot be had, get a draft on Philadelphia or New York, *payable to our order*. If a draft cannot be had, send United States notes. Do not send money by the Express Companies, unless you pay their charges.

TERMS.

Our terms are the same as those of that well known magazine, THE LADY'S FRIEND—in order that the clubs may be made up of the paper and magazine conjointly when so desired—and are as follows:—

One copy (and the large Premium Engraving).....$2.50

Address **HENRY PETERSON & CO.,**

No. 319 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.

☞ Specimen copies will be sent, on the receipt of *five cents*.

A Pugilist's Criticism.

Not long after the professional tete-a-tete between Heenan and Sayers, the former made a brief Continental tour, stopping for a few hours at Antwerp, whose cathedral boasts one of the finest of Rubens's paintings, "The Descent from the Cross," which, oddly enough, was executed for the Antwerp arquebusiers as an indemnification for a threatened lawsuit. The picture was the object of admiration by the persons who composed the party, one of whom pointed out the knowledge of anatomy exhibited by the artist in delineating the wonderful muscles of the arms and legs of the prominent characters in the picture. Mr. Heenan, however, did not seem to see it in that light. His own physical frame was at its perfection, and probably no human being ever displayed a more perfect development of arms and legs than he did at that moment. Reaching down and feeling the calves of his legs and the muscles above, and then pressing the big knobs, hard as knots, on his arms, he quietly remarked: "That's all *gammon; there never was any such muscles as them onto any man!*" A practical statement worth pages of high-art criticism; for, not to put too fine a point upon it, the Benecia Boy could have easily whipped the whole party of roughs whose thews and sinews were immortalized by the pencil of the great artist.

☞ Alexander Dumas is paid for his novels by the number of letters they contain. He has a contract to write a new romance with 3,000,000 letters.

☞ Self-made men, like other made men, are sometimes very badly made.

THE EVE OF YULE.

A CHRISTMAS LYRIC.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

See, the feathery snow-flakes white,
Mid the wan and fading light,
Silent falling to the ground,
Sink to rest without a sound:
Wild winds o'er the hills are sighing;
Snowdrifts in the vales are lying;
Twilight, settling down amain,
Deeply shades the silent lane,
Where the white flakes on the breeze
Flit like ghosts among the trees,
While the light of parting day,
Slowly lessening dies away,
As mid naked branches dim,
Wild winds chaunt its requiem.

Draw the shutters close and tight,
Curtain out the stormy night;
Rock not of the tempest's din,
All is cosy here within:
Let the evening lamps be lit;
Round the hearthstone we will sit
In a circle full of glee,
While the fire burns merrily:
Let the flame still brighter burn,
Gather round the smoking urn,
Joy shall greet our merry ring,
Let us jest and laugh and sing:
This is not a time for sadness,
Here we'll pass the hours in gladness;
May there be no heart to grieve
On the "Merry Christmas" Eve!

In the years long passed away,
Other hearts like ours were gay,
When our sires in olden days
Listened to the minstrel's lays:
Round the wood-fire huge and bright
Merrily they passed the night,
Telling tales of "auld lang syne,"
Quaffing deep the wassail wine,
Wetting oft the bearded lip
With the antiquated "flip"
Creaming o'er the flowing bowl,
Waking mirth within the soul,
While the tapers' light was shed
On the wild stag's antlered head
Hanging on the oaken wall,
In the old baronial hall,
Where the gothic arches grey
Echoed to the roundelay.
Yeomen bold and maidens young
Neath the holly danced and sung,
Passed the joyous hours away
On the eve of Christmas day,
By the yule log's ruddy blaze,
In the light of other days.
But their holidays are o'er,
Round the hearth they meet no more,
And the mistletoe's sad bough
Hath displaced the holly now,
While the ivy's sombre pall
Creepeth o'er the ruined wall:
O'er their rest the willow waves,
They are sleeping in their graves
Underneath the winter's snow,
With the hopes of long ago!

But for us there's joy to-night:
Let the festal fire burn bright;
Let the merry song be chaunted,
And the Christmas tree be planted;
We will deck its branches gay
With the fruits of holiday,
That each blithesome girl and boy
On the morn may wake to joy,
When they view it gleaming bright
In the sunny Christmas light.
Chase away all care and sorrow,
"Merry Christmas" comes to-morrow,
Bringing gladness in its train,
Making old hearts young again,
When they meet on earth once more,
Dear old friends, the loved of yore,
Round the merrie Christmas blaze,
With the loved of early days.

Yet there standeth, here and there,
Round the fire a vacant chair,
Where, in Christmas times of yore,
Loved ones sat we'll meet no more!
Not for them our lamps to-night,
Not for them our fire burns bright;
And their old familiar faces
Never more shall take their places
Mid our circle round the blaze,
As in bygone Christmas days,
And their voices' tender strain
We shall never hear again
Joining in the evening mirth,
By the inglesides of earth.
In their last long slumber deep,
Silently these dear ones sleep;
Never more they'll come to meet us,
Never more their lips shall greet us;
But on memory still are shed
Tender traces of the dead,
As we whisper, "Do they yet
Think of us and not forget?"
And we feel that still they hear us,
And with answering greeting cheer us,
Whispering to the Spirit's ear,
In their soft, low voices dear,
"Merry Christmas, still above
Keep we memories of love."
No! they do not *there* forget,
They are mindful of us yet,
Watching over us to-night,
While around the hearthstone's light,
E'en mid Christmas joys we shed
Memory's tribute to the dead,
As we whisper, soft and low,
"They are thinking of us *now*,"
Not forgetful of our love
In their happy Home above.

Let us then be glad and gay,
They have only passed away
For a season—gladly then
They shall welcome us again,
Where the Christmas trees forever
Blossom by the peaceful river,
And the skies are ever bright
In the happy land of light.

Let the evening prayer be said:
Put the little folks to bed;
Hang the stockings in a row
By the hearth fire glimmering low,
While our little ones are sleeping,
Santa Claus, all silent creeping
Down the chimney, shall come there
With his toys and sweetmeats rare,
For our gentle girls and boys,
Patron of their Christmas joys:
In their dreams they hear the jingle
Of his reindeer's sleigh bells tingle,
See his jolly face all smiling,
See the toys his broad back piling,
See his paunch with soot bespread,
And the snow flakes on his head,
Winter's borrowed pearls all bright
In the flickering fire-light.
And the Christ-child!—poet thought!
Legend from Germania brought!
Telling Jesus' gentle story
To the child in allegory,
How He comes on heavenly wing,
Precious gifts for us to bring,
Pictured by this sweet invention,
To our children's comprehension;
Would that we a faith could feel,
Strong as theirs in Kriss Kingle!
But we must not longer stay;
Softly we will steal away;
Draw the curtains, dim the light;
Kiss the little ones good-night;
Then retiring to our sleep,
Thus our Christmas Eve we keep!

Saviour loving, Saviour dear!
Author of our Christmas cheer!
Mid our gladness, mid our glee,
Let us still remember Thee:
From Thy heavenly throne descending,
With our dust Thy spirit blending,
That from sin and sorrow free,
We might rise to dwell with Thee—
Hear us while to Thee we pray,
On Thy glorious natal day;
Bind us all in bonds of love,
Lead us to Thy home above,
And the glory all shall be
Ever Thine eternally!

FRANK.

Job Golding's Christmas.

BY LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.

It was very strange, thought old Job Golding, that he couldn't be master of his own mind. He had lived a great many years, and neither remorse or memory had ever been in the habit of disturbing him; but now it seemed to him as if the very foundations of his life were breaking up. He was through with his day's work—he had dined comfortably—he sat in an easy-chair in a luxurious room, whose crimson hangings shut out the still cold of the December afternoon—for the 24th of December it was. He was all ready to enjoy himself. How singular that this state of things should remind him of a coming time when his life's work would be all done—even as his day's work was all done now—when he would be ready to sit down in the afternoon and look over the balance sheet of his deeds. How curiously the old days came trooping in slow procession before him.

His dead wife; he had not loved her much when she was with him, but how vivid was his memory of her now! He could see her moving round the house, noiseless as a shadow, never intruding on him after he had once or twice answered her gruffly, but going on her own meek, still ways, with her face growing whiter every day. He began to understand, as he looked back, why her strength had failed and she had been ready, when her baby came, to float out on the tide and let it drift her into God's haven. She had had enough to eat and to drink, but he saw now that he had left her heart to starve. He seemed to see her white, still face, as he looked at it the last time before they screwed down the coffin-lid, with the dumb reproach frozen on it, the eyes that would never plead vainly any more closed forever.

He recalled how passionately the three-days-old baby cried in another room, just at that moment, moving all the people gathered at the funeral with a thrill of pity for the poor little motherless morsel. She *was* a passionate, willful baby, all through her babyhood, he remembered. She wanted—missed without knowing what the lack was—the love which her mother would have given her, and protested against fate with all the might of her lungs. But as soon as she grew old enough to understand how useless it was, *she* had grown quiet, too; just like her mother. He recalled her, all through her girlhood, a shy, still girl, always obedient and submissive, but never drawing very near him. Did she have tastes, he wondered—wants, longings? She never told him.

But suddenly, when she was eighteen, the old, passionate spirit that had made her cry so when she was a baby must have awakened again, he thought; for she fell in love, then, and married in defiance of his wishes. He remembered her standing proudly before him, and asking—

"Father, do you know anything against Harry Church?"

"Yes," he had answered, wrathfully; "I know that he is as poor as Job was when he sat among the ashes; he can't keep a wife."

"Anything else, father?" looking him steadily in the eye.

"No, that's enough," he had thundered; "and I'll tell you, besides, that if you marry him you must lie in the bed you will make. My doors will never open to you again, never."

He met with a will as strong as his own, that time. She *did* marry him, and went away with him from her father's house. She had written home more than once, afterwards, but he had sent the letters all back unopened. He wished, to-day, that he knew what had been in them; whether she had been suffering for anything. He wondered why he had opposed the marriage so much. Harry Church had been a clerk in his store; faithful, intelligent, industrious, only—poor. In that word lay the head and front of his offending. He, Job Golding, was rich—had been rich all his lifetime—but what special thing had riches done for him? He was an old man, now, and all alone. "All alone," he kept saying that over and over, with a sort of vague self-pity.

And all this time a message was on its way to him. Was God preparing his heart to receive it?

He heard a ring at the door, but he went on with his thoughts, and did not trouble himself about it. Meantime, two persons had been admitted into the hall below; a man and a little girl, eight years old, perhaps. Her companion took off her hood and her warm wrappings, and the child stood there—a dainty, delicate creature—her golden curls drooping softly round her face, with its large blue eyes and parted scarlet lips. The housekeeper had come into the hall, and she turned pale as she saw that little face.

"Miss Amy's child," she said to the man, nervously. "It is as much as my place is worth to let her come in here."

"You are Mrs. Osgood, are you not?" said the little girl, looking at her.

"Hear the blessed lamb! Who in this world told you there *was* a Mrs. Osgood?"

"Mamma. You loved mamma, didn't you? She said you were always so kind to her."

"Loved your ma? Well, I *did* love her. The old house has never been the same since she went out of it."

"Then you'll let me go up alone and see grandpa? That is what mamma said I was to do."

Mrs. Osgood hesitated a moment, then love and memory triumphed over fear, and she said—

"Yes, you shall. Heaven forbid I should hinder you! Go right up stairs and open the first door."

The man who had come with her sat down in the hall to wait, and the little figure, with its gleaming, golden hair, tripped on alone.

She opened the door softly, and went in. She did not speak; perhaps the stern-looking old man sitting there awed her to silence. She just stepped up to him and handed him a letter. He took it, scarcely noticing, so busy was he with his thoughts, at the hand of what strange messenger. He looked at the outside. It was his daughter's writing. Ten years ago he had sent her last letter back unopened; but this one—what influence apart from himself moved him to read it? It was not long, but it commenced with "Dear father." He had never been a dear father to her, he thought.

She had waited all these silent years, she told him, because she was determined never to write to him again until they were rich enough for him to know that she did not write from any need of his help. They had passed these ten years in the West, and Heaven had prospered them. Her husband was a rich man, now; and she wanted from her father only his love—wanted only that death should not come between them, and either of them go to her mother's side without having been reconciled to the other.

"Let *her* lips speak to you from the grave," she wrote; "her lips, which you must have loved once, and which never grew old or lost their youth's brightness—let them plead with you to be reconciled to her child. Surely, you will not turn away from the messenger I send—your own grandchild."

The messenger—he had forgotten about her. He turned and she was standing there, like a spirit, on his hearthstone, with her white face and her gleaming golden hair. He looked at her and saw her father's broad, full brow and thoughtful eyes, and below them the sweetness of her mother's smile. His grandchild—his! His heart throbbed chokingly. He grew hungry to clasp her—to feel her soft arms clinging round his neck, her tender lips kissing away the furrows of his hard life from his face. But he feared to startle her. He tried to speak gently—he, to whom gentleness was so new and strange.

"Come here, little girl," he said; and she went up to him fearlessly. "Can you tell me how old you are, and what your name is?"

"I am eight, grandpa, and my name is Amy."

Another Amy! He felt the great sobs rising up from his heart, but he choked them back.

"What have they told you about me?" he asked her, anxiously. Could it be possible, he wondered, that they had not taught her to hate him?

"They always told me that you were far away toward where the sun rose; and if I were good they would fetch me to see you, some day. And every night I say in my prayers, 'God bless papa and mamma, and God bless grandpapa.'"

"Why *didn't* they fetch you; what made them let you come alone?"

"Mamma said she would surprise you with your big grandchild. They are waiting at the hotel, and John is down stairs. They want you to come back with me. Will you, grandpapa?"

Mrs. Osgood looked on in wonder, as her master came down stairs and put on his overcoat—came down holding the child's hand in his, her golden hair floating beside him. Was that old Job Golding?

He stepped into the carriage in which careful Mistress Amy had sent her messenger. The horses did not go fast enough. He would have been in a fever of impatience, but the child's hand in his quieted him. Through it all he was wondering vaguely what it meant—whether he were his own self, or some one else.

At last they were there, and the child led him in—up the long hotel stairs, across hall and corridor—until at length she opened a door and said, cheerily—

"Mamma, here's grandpapa."

His head swam. He was fain to sit down, and there were his own Amy's arms about his neck. Why had he never known what he lost in losing the sweetness of her love, through all these vanished years? He held her fast, now, and he heard her voice close to his ear—

"Father, are we reconciled at last?"

"I don't know, daughter, until you've told me whether you've forgiven me."

"There should be no talk about forgiveness," she said. "You went according to your own lights. It is enough that God has brought us together again in peace. I thought that no one could resist my little Amy, least of all, her grandpapa."

He looked up, and the child stood by, silently; the firelight glittering in her golden hair, her face shining strangely sweet. He put out his arms and drew her into them, close—where no child, not even his own, had ever nestled before. O how much he had missed in life, he thought. He felt her clinging hold round his neck—her kisses dropped upon his face like the pitying dew from heaven, and he—*was* it himself, or another soul in his place?

"Here, father," Amy's voice had a cheerful ring to it, and her happy married life had made of her a fine, contented, matronly-appearing woman, "here are Harry and the boys waiting to speak to you."

He shook his son-in-law's hand heartily. Old feuds, old things, were over now, and all was become new. Then he looked at the boys—six-years-old Hal, three-years-old Geordie—brave, merry little fellows, of whom he should be proud, some day; only they could never be to him quite like this girl in his arms—his first-found grandchild.

He sat there among them, surrounded by

the peace and warmth of their household love, and felt as if a new life had come. He did not go away until long after, by the rules of any well-ordered nursery, those three pairs of bright little eyes should have been closed in sleep; but they must all sit up to see the last of grandpapa. When, at length, he went, he told them that they must all come home to him on the morrow—there must be no more staying at hotels, when his big, lonesome house was waiting for them.

"To-morrow is Christmas," his daughter said, half doubtfully.

"All the better. If Christmas was never kept in my house it ought to be. Come round to dinner—three o'clock sharp—and bring all the boxes with you. That will give you time to pack up, and Mrs. Osgood time to get your rooms ready."

"Boxes and boys—won't they be too much for you, father?"

"When they are I'll tell you," with a last touch of the old gruffness.

Then he went out on the street, and began looking for Christmas gifts. It was new business for him, but he went into it earnestly and anxiously. It was so late, and every one seemed so busy, he thought it would never do to trust to the shopmen for sending things home. So he perambulated the streets like a bewildered Santa Claus—and went home, at last, laden with books, and toys, and jewels, and bon-bons—with a doll that could walk, and a parrot that could talk, and no end of sweets and confections.

He called Mrs. Osgood to help him put them away, and when they were all disposed of he said, with a curious attempt at maintaining his old sternness and dignity, which caused the good woman a secret smile—

"Mrs. Osgood, I hope you will do yourself and me credit to-morrow. My daughter, Mrs. Church, is coming home with her husband and children, and I want the best Christmas dinner you can get up, to be on the table at a quarter past three."

Mrs. Osgood had always loved Miss Amy, in the old days, and had been hoping against hope, all these years, for the reconciliation which had come now. So her heart was in her task, and the dinner was a masterpiece—a real work of genius, as she used to say, when she told the story afterwards.

Amy, and Amy's husband, and the roistering boys, and best of all, the little girl close at grandpapa's side, with her happy eyes shining, and her golden hair gleaming, and her quiet, womanly little ways—what a jubilant party they were! And among them all Job Golding saw, or fancied that he saw, another face, over which, almost thirty years ago, he had seen the grave-sod piled—a face sad and wistful no longer, but bright with a strange glory. No one else saw *her*, he knew, for the gay laughs were going round, but close at his side she seemed to stand; and he heard, or fancied that he heard, a whisper from her parted lips, which only his ear caught—the Christmas anthem—

"Peace on earth and good will toward men."

CHRISTMAS CAROLS.

BY FLORENCE PERCY.

The children sung a song this Christmas morning,
Mellow and clear, outside my chamber door,
Waking me softly from my pleasant dreaming
Of unforgotten Christmas days of yore.

Sweetly they sung, my neighbor's happy children,
Two merry girls and one glad-hearted boy,
Repeating oft their song's rejoicing burden,—
"On Christmas morn the angels sing for joy!"

Sweetly they sung; but ah! their cheerful voices
Broke up my soul's deep founts of hidden woe,
And pressing down my face against the pillow,
I let the bitter torrent overflow.

Missing the little child that warbled softly
Two years ago to-day a song like this,
And when the joyful melody was ended,
Held up her sweet mouth for a Christmas kiss.

Only one Christmas Eve my fair-eyed darling
Lisped of dear Santa Claus her dreams among,
Only one Christmas morn, white-robed and joyful—
Lifted her clear voice in a Christmas song.

I see her little figure standing tiptoe,
To hang her dainty stocking on the wall;—
O, sinless heart! O, perfect faith of childhood,
Believing every thing and trusting all!

Peace, aching heart! O, let me trust entirely,
With faith and strength that nothing can destroy,
That my sweet baby is among the angels,
Who, on this Christmas morning, sing for joy!

An amusing incident occurred in one of the churches of Philadelphia recently. An old lady, whose failing eyes demanded an unusually large prayer-book, started for evening church a little early. Stopping on the way to call on a friend, she laid her prayer-book on the centre-table. When the bells began to chime, she snatched what she supposed to be her prayer-book and started for church. Her seat was in the chancel end of the gallery. The organ ceased playing. The minister read, "The Lord is in His holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before Him." In the effort to open her supposed prayerbook she started the spring of the music-box which she had taken instead. It began to play. In her consternation she put it on the floor. It would not stop. She put it on the seat. It sounded louder than ever. Finally she carried it out, while it played the "Washing Day," an Irish jig tune.

CHRISTMAS.

BY MARY HOWITT.

Of all the days throughout the year,
The gladdest day and best,
Comes in the heart of winter,
When nature is at rest.

When the days are at the shortest,
And the nights are dark and long,
And only of the singing birds
The robin pipes his song.

When not a flower is on the hill,
Nor a green leaf on the tree,
And only the holly and ivy
Are beautiful to see.

Then cometh the best day of the year,
The blessedest day of all,
When Jesus Christ, the Saviour,
Was born in the oxen's stall.

Not amidst gold and purple,
In pomp of worldly pride,
With chancellors and archbishops,
And ladies on every side.

But all among the oxen
Those plodding and patient things,
Was born, in the depth of winter,
The King of earthly kings.

LINDENHURST.

(CONCLUDED.)

BY HAROLD KING.

CHAPTER IV.

FREE AGAIN.

When I rose the next morning I felt like a man who had had all the gentler feelings crushed out of him.

During the many hours of the night I had lain restlessly awake, my brain had been actively engaged in criticising the statements I had heard from the hoarse voices of the angry villagers. I endeavored to sift the true from the false; to ascertain how much I was to believe, how much to reject as improbable and unfounded. It was, in the first instance, improbable that a mother would shut up her own daughter on the plea of madness, unless there were some reason in fact for so doing; it was improbable, in the moral nature of things, that a lady of Mrs. Blondell's refinement and taste, and, I must say, amiability of disposition, should be guilty of so gross an act of cruelty, so scandalous an outrage on the laws of the community; it was improbable that, if Mrs. Blondell were thus guilty, her conduct would not have been blazoned abroad beyond the confines of Lindenhurst, and she and her daughters been tabooed society; it was improbable, again, that Aurelia and Florence, girls of excellent good feeling, of great tenderness, and deep sympathetic natures, could be accomplices with their mother in so fiendish an affair. It was, on the other hand, probable that Mrs. Blondell might not be a special favorite with the villagers, for she was very stately and repelling in her manner to inferiors; it was probable that she had offended some old woman, who, out of spite, had not scrupled to spread false and malicious reports, and we know how rapidly false and malicious reports spread, and what hold they have of the popular imagination; it was probable that there might be a basis of plausible fact for the slander to rest upon, and that the pale face I had seen gazing out from behind the bars of her caged window was the face of Fanny Blondell; it was probable, too, that Mrs. Blondell would have charge of whatever property belonged to her unfortunate daughter, and this circumstance would of itself be a poisonous weapon in the quiver of a vindictive enemy.

Thus I strove for a time to balance the *pros* and *cons* as impartially as I could, in my reason. But my heart was not equally dispassionate—its judgment leaned towards the evidence of the villagers; it adopted the *role* of the accuser, and vaguely believed in the guilt of the accused before she had been heard. Were there no independent grounds for this dark bias? Yes. Aurelia's evasion in the morning awoke a painful suspicion, which I could not suppress, that there was something wrong. Her attributing the shriek to an owl, when she was aware of the real cause; the momentary pallor that stole over her face, as though I had made an undesirable discovery; her confession, when firmly pressed, that it was a crazed girl and nothing more, when she knew it was her own sister, at length convinced me that there was some deep deception being played upon me. I felt angry and bitter to the heart's core. Gentleness, the offspring of love and confidence, yielded to a sternness engendered by a sense of wrong. No wrong is, perhaps, felt so great as that which springs from the discovery of violated trust.

An old inflexibility of temper, which had been melted at the soft fires of Aurelia's blue eyes, prepared me for the duties of the day. When I met Branscombe at the breakfast-table, he bade me good-morning in the tone of one afraid to speak too loud, lest he should disturb a spirit of affliction. This I had not expected, for Tom's general specific for a disconsolate friend, was banter and the assumption of extra gayety. Now he was quiet as though he had met with or had been called upon to share in a calamity.

The breakfast was proceeded with for some time in silence. At length I made bold to say, and that in a steady voice,—

"What do you think of the disclosures of last night?"

Branscombe was surprised at the apparent indifference with which I put the question, and looked hard in my face, as though to detect what kind of spirit was moving me.

He did not speak.

"If it is as I suspect," I continued, "we must put away all tender feeling; there is a work of justice to be done—stern justice, and we must not flinch from it."

"I understand you, Percival," replied Branscombe. "I am glad to find the old heart of oak in you. She is not worthy of you."

Tom saw that he had wounded me.

"I am sorry I have pained you, Percival," he apologised, quickly; "I will not mention her name again," and he held out his hand to me.

He was as gentle as a nurse afterwards.

CAUTION TO SISTERS.

HARRIET.—"I say, Charley, I've been stealing some of your scent; but it isn't very nice—something odd about it—smell!"

CHARLEY.—"Not wiped your lips with it, I hope? It's the new stuff for my moustaches—brings 'em out an inch every night!"

"Thank you, my friend. Whatever amount of wrong-doing may attach to Mrs. Blondell, we have yet to ascertain how far the daughters are implicated. They may be comparatively innocent."

This I urged in Aurelia's defence, though it was far from my conviction.

"Tom, I must ask you to accompany me this morning to Lindenhurst. I could hardly undertake the task by myself."

The proceedings of the previous evening at the inn had evidently been reported to Mrs. Blondell; for on our arrival at the house she was fully prepared to receive me. She had not, however, expected me to bring a friend.

Usually I was ushered into the drawing-room. On this occasion we were shown into the library, probably, perhaps, because it lay back from the offices of the establishment, and any unpleasant proceedings could there take place with closed doors, as it were, without fear of being made public. Mrs. Blondell was sitting in state in a high crimson leather arm-chair, at the further end of a large oak table, also covered with crimson leather. Aurelia and Florence were standing together a little on one side of the chair, in the shadow of a fine old carved bookcase. Aurelia was pale as death.

There was no advance to meet us as we entered—no cordial greeting. This was in itself suspicious; but the line of tactics Mrs. Blondell had chosen was that of defence. Without waiting for an attack, she opened fire from behind an entrenchment of august stateliness, defiance, and *hauteur*.

"You have brought your friend, I see, Captain Hope, to hear my refutation and denial of the wicked slanders your ears were regaled with last night. You have done well."

"I hope, Mrs. Blondell, to find that there is not the slightest truth in the statement I was a reluctant and pained listener to," I replied, in as firm a voice as I could command. I dared not cast my eyes to where Aurelia stood, half leaning against the bookcase.

"It is a gross calumny, the whole that you heard, Captain Hope—a gross calumny."

"Then you have no daughter confined in this house in a demented condition?"

"No," and Mrs. Blondell indignantly disclaimed the idea.

I looked at Branscombe, and he seemed inclined, from the surprise he evinced, to think that we had been stupidly deluded. I was inclined to think so too, after this short and positive denial; but piqued to ascertain the name of the girl who was a perpetual inmate of the barred chamber, I observed,—

"You must excuse me, Mrs. Blondell, if, after the positive statement I had heard last night that the girl is named Fanny Blondell, and that she is your daughter, to clear up matters, I press you to be kind enough to tell me her name. There is no antidote so potent against calumny as truth."

"She is no daughter of mine," replied Mrs. Blondell, calmly; but in a tone of contempt for the poor imprisoned creature.

I did not like the tone or the evasion.

"Is her name Fanny Blondell, may I ask?"

"Really, Captain Hope, I shall be happy to answer all reasonable questions; but these are family matters, and I cannot allow them to be discussed in the presence of a stranger, especially after the denial I have given you that the girl is any daughter of mine."

"I shall be sorry to give offence here, Mrs. Blondell," I replied, firmly; "but I must know whether the girl confined in this house is named Fanny Blondell. To this question I must have a plain answer; as yet you have only equivocated."

Mrs. Blondell did not condescend to reply; but a voice from the recess in the window tremulously answered,—

"It is."

The voice was Aurelia's.

"But she is no daughter of mine," repeated Mrs. Blondell, hurriedly, working herself up into a tempest of rage.

"No daughter of yours!" I echoed. "Then she is, perhaps, the daughter of the late Mr. Blondell by a former wife," I added, the idea forcing itself upon me like a flash of lightning.

No answer.

"All is explained, Tom," I said, mournfully, turning to Branscombe, "a *step-daughter*."

"Mamma," interposed Aurelia, coming forward and throwing herself on her knees before Mrs. Blondell, "do explain all. Make it clear to Captain Hope that there is nothing wrong in what you have done—that Fanny really is incapable of taking care of herself, or acting like a sensible human being."

"How am I to persuade Captain Hope, when he has evidently come here prejudiced against us?" replied Mrs. Blondell, in a tone that was a kind of appeal *ad misericordiam*. "What can I do to disabuse Captain Hope's mind?"

"Let me and my friend, Captain Branscombe, see this girl," I answered, quickly; "and we can satisfy ourselves and set this calumny at rest."

"No difficulty in that," conceded Mrs. Blondell, with a frankness that surprised both Branscombe and myself. "Perhaps they expect to find the girl enclosed in a bare room, fed on bread and water, and chained to the bed-post," continued the enraged lady, with bitter irony, addressing her daughters. "Ring for Mrs. Newton, my dear."

How well the parts were played.

"Mrs. Newton," here observed Florence, "told me this morning that Fanny has a lucid interval. It began after her paroxysm was over last night, and is likely to continue till the moon is in her third quarter."

Mrs. Newton entered; a large, muscular woman, with a hideous physiognomy, repulsive enough, it struck me, to cow a poor, timid, helpless girl into any degree of insanity, according as she chose to exercise her baneful power upon the unfortunate object of her charge.

Seeing the influence that the presence of such a woman was likely to have upon her victim, I observed, "We should wish to see the girl alone."

"Mrs. Newton will go no further than the corridor," was the reply, which was intended as information for us and an instruction to the ill-favored guardian of Fanny Blondell.

We followed "the woman with the repulsive face," as Branscombe was fond of calling this ogress whenever he spoke of her, up two flights of stairs, protected by massive carved oaken banisters, then through a long passage, till we came to a narrow flight of stairs, at the top of which we could notice a grille or gate of ironwork. Mrs. Newton mounted the stairs, unlocked the gate and allowed us to pass. She again shut the gate, with no further observation than, "You will find my patient in the room on the left-hand side;" then adding a shrill call, "Miss Fanny!" just to let her know that her keeper was at hand.

Branscombe and myself trod gently along the corridor, which was light and airy, being glazed at the top, till we came to the room of the ill-fated sufferer. The door was open. There was no appearance of harsh or cruel treatment; the place was neatly furnished with a clean truckle bedstead, washing-stand, toilette-table, a chest of drawers and two chairs. There were also a few books on a shelf. The room, like the corridor, was spacious and light, a part of the ceiling being formed by a roof of glass. There was only one window; it was less than six feet from the ground and fenced with iron bars.

We sought the maniac girl. There she sat, crouched in the further corner of the room, trembling and timid as a hare. She eyed us with a quick, suspicious, piteous glance as we entered, like one terror-stricken. But what was she like? How different from our normal idea of a poor lunatic with tattered raiment and dishevelled hair. With the exception of a slight wildness about the eyes, the effect of fear, and sorrow, and hopeless punishment, she exhibited none of the symptoms we associate with madness. Her face, indeed, was pale as marble, but exquisitely beautiful; her features were soft and regular, her hair of the richest brown, her eyes a shade darker, her hands small and delicate, and her complexion white as alabaster. Had we not been told that she was the daughter of a former wife of Mr. Blondell's, we should have set her down as being younger than Aurelia or Florence. She was clad in a light morning dress that clung loosely about her, and which was gathered in at the waist with a tasselled girdle.

I essayed to open the conversation:

"Are you Miss Fanny Blondell?" I inquired, softly.

There was no answer; but the fairy-like figure slunk back from us farther and farther, till she was almost doubled up against the corner formed by the bedstead and the wall.

I advanced with my hand held out in token of amity, saying at the same time,

"We are your friends, Miss Blondell."

It was piteous and painful to see how she regarded my approach with fawn-like fear; she was thoroughly cowed by our presence.

Branscombe came forward, and in his soft, bland, soothing voice repeated my words,

"We are you friends, Miss Blondell."

She viewed us over and over again with a look of mingled dread and suspicion; then appeared to gather a little confidence from a final inspection, for she meekly and submissively observed,

"Are you the doctors?"

"No, Miss Blondell, we have nothing to do with doctors; we are your friends, and would know why you are confined here, and see if we cannot set you free."

"Mamma won't let you, and the doctors," she replied, still shrinking from us.

"Who is your mamma?" I asked.

At this the poor girl burst into tears. After a while she cried,

"Alas! I have no mother, or I should not be confined here."

"But why are you confined here?"

"Because I am mad!" she exclaimed, pressing her hands to her temples as if to still their throbbing.

"Who says you are mad?"

"Mamma and the doctors;" force of habit had evidently ingrained the word mamma for Mrs. Blondell on her lips.

"But we do not think you mad, and are come to see you, and tell your mamma so, and get you released."

These words drew the caged bird from her retreat; she rushed forward, threw herself at Branscombe's feet, and kissed his hands for gratitude. Tom had evidently won her confidence, for she studiously avoided me, replying invariably through him to my questions.

Tom lifted up the prostrate creature, seated her on a chair, and gently opened the cross-questioning again.

"If you are not mad, why do they keep you here?" he observed, affectionately.

"Because mamma, and the doctors, and Mrs. Newton, say I am."

"Do you ever see your sisters?"

Fanny shuddered.

"Never."

"Why not?"

"They were not kind to me."

I hinted that we should ask her about her property; but Branscombe objected, saying that there was no necessity to worry her.

"She is as sane as you or I," he added.

I thought it as well, however, that some allusion should be made to it, to see what the girl really knew on the subject.

After beating about the bush for a little, Branscombe said to her, still as gently as human voice could utter the words,

"You are rich, are you not?"

Another burst of tears followed this appeal to her knowledge.

"Papa said I should be rich, and an heiress. This was when I was a little child; but he died soon after, and mamma says I am poor and dependant," and the poor girl wept again.

"Do they treat you kindly?" I ventured to ask. At this her frail, delicate body trembled violently, and her sweet face became distorted with a sudden cloud of dread. I was pained at the idea of having put her to so much anguish; but I wanted an explanation if possible, of the struggle and scream of the previous night. The look of horror and the alarm was sufficient reply.

After we had soothed the poor girl a little longer, Tom held out his hand, which she trustfully took, bathing it with tears. We then rose to leave.

"We are your friends," he said at parting, "and will tell Mrs. Blondell that you must not be detained here any longer. We will soon return to see that you are set free."

When we reached the landing, Tom gave me an expressive glance of the eye. I understood it. It meant that the girl was wickedly imprisoned, and must be liberated at whatever cost or trouble.

When we arrived at the foot of the staircase we were shown into the drawing-room. The library, a sombre chamber, was well suited for a judicial process, or any business that should be invested with awe and solemnity. But that was passed now. Mrs. Blondell had descended from the throne where she had assumed the character of defendant, judge, and jury, and now sat triumphantly in an embroidered fauteuil in her sumptuously furnished saloon. The noon sun of a bright, warm, September day, poured a flood of rich light in upon the amber satin tapestry, and the golden ornaments of the splendid room; whilst the flower-variegated lawn outside glistened and sparkled in the cheerful sheen. But that light fell with richer lustre upon the auburn hair and the pure complexion of Aurelia Blondell. There she stood, as we entered, in the centre of the room, her pretty foot playing with the handsome life-like figures woven into the velvet carpet. With a sweet and apparently artless smile, her face beaming with a happy expression, she advanced to meet me.

"I am glad, Percival, that you have had the courage to go up and satisfy yourself as to the condition of that poor girl. You cannot conceive the pain that her necessary confinement has given to all of us in the house, who love her dearly—the once amiable, sweet girl! How did you find her? Was she still under the delusion that it is mamma who has kept her there, and that she is not deranged?"

Aurelia approached me with her hand extended and with all the coquetry of a beautiful woman in her grace and manner. To avoid taking her hand—that hand which I would but yesterday have given my own to secure,—I moved to another part of the room. It occurred to me, however, that it would best be to meet Aurelia's syren manœuvres by a little by-play of hypocrisy.

"She does not look like one deranged, and her talk is rational," I observed, quietly.

"Just now," put in Florence, naively, "but when the fits are on she raves like a maniac, poor darling!"

"My opinion, Mrs. Blondell," said Branscombe, rather sharply, "is that the girl is no more insane than you or I, or any one in this room."

"And you are at liberty to enjoy your opinion," retorted that great lady, indignantly, "here is the certificate of two medical men."

"Two medical men!" sneered Branscombe.

"Oh, Percival!" exclaimed Aurelia, with persuasive tears in her eyes, "do not let mamma be insulted in her own house."

"No one wishes, Miss Aurelia, to insult your mamma," I replied, coldly, in spite of my intention to proceed cunningly. "For your sake Captain Branscombe will be polite whilst under this roof where I have received so much hospitality. You must, however, perceive that as long as the mystery which surrounds Miss Blondell is not cleared up, our intercourse is suspended."

"You mean, Captain Hope," replied Aurelia, flushing up and speaking with her natural animation, "that you reject my hand because I am so unfortunate as to have a sister whose mind is deranged."

"I am not convinced that she is deranged," I rejoined, without however manifesting any of the bitterness of feeling that I felt was goading me to madness. I was anxious to advance a step further. I therefore continued, "Miss Blondell has property in her own right, I believe?"

This brought out Mrs. Blondell, who had sat silently in her magnificent fauteuil.

"It is the question of money, Captain Hope, that you are anxious about, is it? I am surprised that you should raise up so delicate a point before a gentleman, who, though he may be your friend, is a stranger to our family. Know, Captain Hope, that Aurelia and her sister are well provided for, although their capricious father did leave the bulk of the property to that—" Mrs. Blondell, who was evidently sore on this subject, was going to say "minx or vixen," or use some surly word; she however, exchanged it for the more politic one of "poor girl."

This was exactly what Branscombe and myself wanted to elicit. Here was the motive for the incarceration. We looked at each other significantly: and before either could speak, Aurelia had seized my hand, and, in a voice tender with emotion and with eyes beaming with love, whispered in my ear:

"Remember the test. You said that you would love me though I were stripped of all my possessions. I am stripped; I have nothing; it is all Fanny's."

I disengaged my hand, observing with no little sternness—it was requisite to keep my heart from melting and yielding to her artful blandishments—"I then thought you spotless and innocent. Oh, Aurelia!" I could not resist the impulse, "who could have thought you guilty of joining in so cowardly a conspiracy? You, with your refinement, your cultivated taste, your boasted love of nature, your apparent simplicity, your delicate softness! You, who could find pleasure in the gilded ball-room, in the opera, and the concert, whilst you were conscious of being one in a league to despoil an elder sister, and convert the mansion which was her own into a narrow prison for her. Who could have suspected one so fair and loving of being so foul and cruel?"

At these reproaches, Aurelia sunk upon a sofa, sobbed for a moment, and then became hysterical.

Neither Tom nor myself offered assistance, leaving her to the care of Mrs. Blondell and Florence. The latter busied herself with laying her sister along the sofa, and then, sprinkling her face with water from one of the flower vases. When she had contrived to lay Aurelia into an attitude of repose, she looked at me with bitter wrath in her face.

"I know not what term to apply to a man who woos a woman for money, and when he finds she has none brings a friend to see how grossly he can insult her by rejecting her hand."

I endured the taunt in silence, quietly looking on at the remedial measures adopted by mother and daughter.

Mrs. Blondell was more wily, and addressing me in a manner she intended to be dignified and impressive, observed, "I perceive, Captain Hope, that there must be an end to the prospect of a union, so auspiciously held out to us, between Aurelia and yourself. I can see no good in your remaining here any longer. I trust, however, that you will, as a gentleman, consider all that has transpired within these walls as private and confidential."

We saw through her object at once. Branscombe replied quickly, and even menacingly, "This is not a private question. Miss Blondell is wronged by being imprisoned upstairs; it is a public wrong, and I shall seek for it a public redress."

Mrs. Blondell trembled faintly, and a slight paleness blanched her face.

"Your language is violent, Captain Branscombe," she replied, quietly, but with a spice of *hauteur* in her tone. "You may take what steps you please, but so long as I hold this certificate I can defend myself against malignant accusers, and am confident of justice before the bar of public opinion. I hope your conscience gives you as little trouble as mine does me. Our interview is at an end."

"Conscience!" cried Branscombe, who could scarcely repress himself when we got outside the gates, he felt so relieved; "Conscience! I wish it did trouble her a little more; it would be all the better for her victim. She carried it off, however, famously, though it will not be, I expect, triumphantly. We must take immediate steps for the release of that poor girl."

"Not an hour must be lost," I replied, eager to get some distraction for my mind, which was sorely beaten and harassed by the events of the last twelve hours.

That same afternoon I wrote a letter to the Commissioners in Lunacy, calling their attention to the case of Fanny Blondell, and pointing out the propriety of a speedy investigation. The letter is too lengthy to be inserted here, but one passage I must quote. After detailing the general circumstances of the case, and the visit of Branscombe and myself to the imprisoned girl, I observed, "You will naturally seek a *motive*. The motive is obvious. So long as Miss Blondell is declared a lunatic, Mrs. Blondell, her stepmother, enjoys the large revenues which spring from the estate, which belongs by the will of the late Mr. Theobald Blondell to his eldest daughter, Fanny Blondell. I have reason to believe, from what I hear, that the late Theobald Blondell was an eccentric old gentleman, and took a strong dislike to his second wife and their two children, having his eldest daughter, the issue of his former marriage, constantly with him, and doting over her with the most blind and partial affection. I have also ascertained that when he died he left nothing to his second wife, *nee* Aurelia Wills, and only a hundred a year each to his two daughters. The equity of these bequests, however, does not touch the matter before us; the question is the legality of the detention of Fanny Blondell on the plea of insanity, a question which I trust, through your lordships' instructions, to have decided by an enlightened and impartial British jury." The letter was signed by Branscombe as well as myself.

It was a fortnight at least before we received any notice of our communication; a cold, formal, official, printed paper was sent for us to sign, and it contained also certain questions for us to answer. The paper was promptly signed, the questions duly answered, and the missive despatched by return of post. A month of impatience elapsed before we heard again, but we found we had advanced a step further, for the Commissioners had been communicating with Mrs. Blondell, and had obtained her justification. It was evident she was not to be frightened into relensing her victim, and that she intended to show fight. It also became evident, as we proceeded further, and matters seemed to be getting more entangled and complicated, that we should have to employ a lawyer. This we did, and felt a great relief, for we saw that justice was in danger of being strangled by sundry technicalities which we could neither understand nor guard against.

But why should I drag the reader through the slough of this judicial investigation? Let it suffice to say that the proceedings from first to last took an anxious and a weary six months, and that while the trial was going on every day was harassing and perplexing. No one would venture to say which way the jury would decide, the learned counsel for Mrs. Blondell oppressing the brains of the twelve enlightened jurymen who sat on the occasion, with an infinite variety of precedents, from our medical jurisprudence stores, and puzzling their intellects with abstruse definitions of insanity, and subtle distinctions between reason and unreason.

One good result of the prolixity of the trial, however, was, that it threw Tom Branscombe, who was indefatigable in "working" up the case, and gave the lawyer no rest, a great deal into the company of Fanny Blondell, and it required no keen perception to discover that what had been undertaken from a love of justice was being pursued from a love of Fanny Blondell. Tom himself did not know this, I feel convinced; but I, to whom he spoke in raptures, nay with pathos, of the beauty and sufferings of that poor girl, of her simple nature, warm-heartedness, and tender gratitude, felt sure how it would end, should the suit prove successful.

Successful! How doubtful are the issues, when they hang upon the nice discrimination of subtle points and the polished eloquence of a professional sophist! But I had put my trust in the truth of our allegations, in that sterling common sense which preeminently characterizes Englishmen, and in their inherent love of justice. Nor was I deceived. The proofs of insanity were very vague, whilst the *motive* of incarceration was glaring. Unanimously the jury returned a verdict of "Not Insane." This was received with cheers by the crowd, and Branscombe, who was standing by Fanny Blondell's side, which by-the-by he had never quitted since the trial began, in the ecstasy of his delight, caught her up in his arms, pressed her to his heart, and kissed her. The next moment he placed her back in the bench, blushing like a child who had been caught *in flagrante delicto*.

The subsequent history of the persons who have figured in this little drama is soon told. Mrs. Blondell and her daughters quitted for ever the neighborhood of Lindenhurst, and retired to a remote part of Yorkshire, where they were able to live comfortably on their united incomes, Mrs. Blondell having a small private property of her own. There Aurelia's beauty, grace, and accomplishments were not thrown away; for in less than two years she became the wife of the squire of the parish, a bachelor of forty, by which means she re-entered, though on a limited scale, the arena of fashionable life. A few months later Florence accepted the hand of the vicar of a neighboring village.

Branscombe, having accompanied Miss Blondell back to Lindenhurst after the trial, and acted for her as a confidential steward in the direction and management of her affairs, what more natural, after what we know of their intercourse, than, having confessed his love, she should confess hers? Tom's was a pure, unselfish affection, and no man ever deserved more than he the happiness he enjoyed with Fanny Blondell and her estates.

As to myself, the reader will excuse me if I am reticent. The indignation I felt at the wrong which I suffered, together with the pre-occupation of my mind during the legal proceedings tended to divert and deaden the blow which would have fallen heavily and cruelly upon me, had my connection with Aurelia Blondell have been otherwise severed. Time is an effectual cure for most evils; it has proved so in my case, and I can afford to look back upon those three months of courtship with Spartan coolness.

☞ The cause of the dreadful famine in India was the effort to raise cotton, and the consequent small supply of rice.

☞ A Missouri paper finds a blessing even in prairie fires. It says that the conflagrations have wholly destroyed the malarious poisons, so that although property is lost, health is gained.

☞ A story is told concerning the production of "The Lady of Lyons" at Salt Lake City Theatre. "An aged Mormon arose, and went out with his twenty-four wives, angrily stating that he wouldn't sit and see a play where a man made such a blamed fuss over one woman."

☞ Exchange is generally profitable. The American people are now giving Dickens plenty of American notes. He gave the people a quantity in 1843. Nothing like a balance of accounts. In the present case the people give greenbacks; in the former they got whacks on the back. Variety is the spice of life, but too much spice spoils variety.

☞ More sense has been whipped out of school boys than into them.

☞ The Church Union has a correspondent who writes: "I've seen the devil. I've heard him preach. He lives in Brooklyn." It is to be hoped nothing personal is intended.

The Captain's Lost Arm.

It was at one of our evening camp fires in India that he told his story. Far in the distant jungle sounded the cry of the terrible wild beasts that reigned there—it sounded over the plains and came to our ears with the most dismal monotony. We could easily imagine how gracefully the tiger crouched there, how like flame his eyeballs gleamed.

Above us was the deep, deep purple of an Indian sky, its stars burning with a lustre that our cooler England never knows. The lurid blaze of our fire threw eerie glimmers out into the darkness.

There were four of us. We were half lying along the ground, each of us industriously puffing at our cheroot. There had been a silence of a quarter of an hour, when Charteris, looking at the Captain as he calmly smoked, said, "Now, Roland, isn't it a favorable time to redeem your promise of a year ago?"

Captain Roland looked up questioningly. I believe there was no greater favorite in the regiment than Roland, and there was no danger of spoiling him either. He was about thirty-five years old—he had been in India ten years, and thus far escaped fevers and wounds, though no man exposed his life more bravely—but he never did it foolhardily.

His left arm was gone, but none of us knew how it was lost—it had not been in battle.

In reply to his look, Charteris said, "You know you promised to tell us how you happened to lose your arm."

Roland shuddered perceptibly as he withdrew his cigar from his mouth, and said: "Yes, I did promise, and I hope it'll do me good to tell that story once. I've kept silent about it, but I haven't forgotten it. You see a man remembers a thorough fight a good while.

"It was when I was in the — regiment, before I was transferred to this. That was almost eleven years ago, and I was a good deal younger, and rushed into all sorts of scrapes—though I do hope under the same circumstances as happened that day I should do the same thing over again. I was a lieutenant in those days, and that morning I was sent out in command of half a dozen men in pursuit of a deserter, who was reported to be hiding in the vicinity of that place we call Marvel's Gully. You know the place? There are not many of us soldiers but do know it. The sun glared down with unvarying, cloudless heat; a gentle wind blew over the earth like the breath from an oven ten times heated: it struck against me as I rode, and I shuddered as I felt it, for it seemed the breath of some fire monster that would devour this luckless land. I am more used to that breeze now, but it used to make me the most home-sick of anything.

"We rode as fast as we dared in the heat, and by noon had reached the wretched village where we were ordered to search for the deserter. I did not much like the job, and rather hoped we should not find him; but we did, and while we were safely securing the miserable wretch, a party of natives came up in great excitement, and begged us to go down to the gully with them, saying that that morning a young girl, the pet of the village, had gone down on some kind of an errand, and that they were afraid she had fallen a victim to a tiger; one of them had been seen lurking about after the girl had started.

"The men in my little command were weary and disinclined to go, and some of them had had rather disagreeable experiences in such expeditions. But I thought of the girl, and hoped the tiger had missed her; and in anticipation I felt the triumph of killing him before she had fallen into his power. So I told the natives I would go with them, and I left my men in the village, with strong suspicions that they would all be drunk when I came back.

"With my gun over my arm—I had both arms then—I stole softly along over the baked earth with my dusky companions, who did not seem to mind the heat at all, but went on with skins glistening in the sun, with eyes that looked stealthily on every side as they advanced. It was the first time I ever hunted a tiger, and, from the moment we started, I felt a strange excitement, more painful than exhilarating.

"In an hour's time we reached the gully—the deep bed of a dry stream—a place where at some seasons rushes a torrent of water. The place was not so dry but in some parts of it grew a wild luxuriance of vegetation, a gorgeous blossoming of deep-colored flowers, and the air was sickening and heavy with the perfume of them. As we came close to the ruins, I thought the half dozen natives with me gave some signs of a disposition to shirk out of too near an approach to the supposed lair of the beast. I did not know much about those fellows then; but I have learned to think since, that on the whole they are about as brave as the average of us human beings.

"I had reached the thickest part of the tall shrubbery, and saw ahead the gleam of an open space—a part of the empty bed of the stream. With my gun cocked, I carefully pushed aside the leaves, feeling as if some dreadful sight was to meet my eye. And true enough!—in the open space, but under the shade of a broad-leaved tree, sat a huge tiger—sat upon his haunches like a cat—panting, but apparently enjoying his rest and his anticipated feast. Lying in front of him, so near that his paws touched her, was the motionless, insensible body of a girl of sixteen or seventeen, her long, black hair streaming on the ground, her face upturned and colorless!

"I could not tell whether she was dead or not. In that first horrible, fascinated moment I did not move; I forgot that I had a gun. The tiger looked down at her, touched her a little with his paw, just as I had a hundred times seen a cat do with a mouse. His motion dispelled my immobility. I raised my gun, and took careful aim, and fired.

"The beast looked up wildly, bounded forward over the girl, then fell down and lay still, the blood oozing from his breast. I dashed through the branches and ran towards the girl, hearing the natives push along some way behind. One of them must have been in advance of the rest, for before I had reached the girl's side I heard a shrill cry of warning and horror from the rear, and in the same instant I saw the the tiger struggle to his feet again; I caught the green and yellow glitter of his eyes, the snowy sheen of his fangs. All that I saw in the instant—the next he had sprung upon me. I felt, in the second of the greatest physical horror I can imagine, his teeth crushing through my flesh—then I felt him leaping away with me; then mercifully the blankness of unconsciousness came to me."

Captain Roland paused for a moment, his face white, the hand that held his forgotten cheroot trembling a little. He had spoken in the low, quiet tones that impress so deeply; and by the quietness of that camp-fire, with the distant howls of fierce brutes in the air, with that solemn sky overhead, we all felt the horror of the story he told.

"When I awakened, the blazing sun had long since passed the meridian; long, horizontal rays of yellow light came in narrow bars between the boles of the trees of a grove a few rods away. I was lying on an open plain, in a place I did not know, though I could not believe it to be far from the gully. But I could not feel, much less think, at first. By degrees a sense of pain began to grow upon me. I was bruised all over my body; I ached everywhere. Only my left arm was free from pain, and I looked down in wonder at it, glad that something had escaped.

"I cannot tell you the sensation that came over me as I saw, not my arm, but a mass of flesh, and the linen of my sleeve—a mangled object without shape.

"Just above my elbow my arm regained its form; it was not apparently injured there. There was no sensation in it; it was for the time being incapable of suffering. At the first moment I did not remember the cause; then I looked about for the tiger, for it must have been he who had brought me here. I found him; he was lying close at my head, utterly motionless; I could see his eyes, and I knew by them that he was dead; it was my shot that had killed him at last, though he lived to taste a partial revenge.

"I began to suffer acutely. And, besides all my real pains, I thought of the dreadful death that awaited me. I could not live long in that situation, perhaps not even if found and cared for; but that I did not expect. I was young and hopeful. I had friends whom I loved in that far-off and pleasant England. My heart bled as I thought of them, and I tried to banish such ideas from my mind, but I could not. Again and again they would return, and I lived over all my happy life at the old manor-house, which is my home. At last, when the sun had finally gone down, and a full, red moon had swung itself up the horizon, staring wildly at me, a sort of stupor came over me, and I fell into a heavy sleep which was more stupidity than sleep. Thus I spent the night, alternately waking and falling off into a sort of trance. I thought it likely that I should fall a prey to some wandering beast, but I was not troubled by the thought. But Heaven had decreed that they should find some other food that night.

"In the earliest light of the morning, before the sun was up, I became conscious that some one was kneeling by my side, had laid a cool hand wet in water upon my head, and was holding drink to my lips. I started wide awake at this, and looked vaguely at the girl—for it was a girl, the one whom I had seen lying at the feet of the tiger in the gully.

"With her, and looking down at me with mute horror in their faces, were the half dozen men of my command. They lifted me up upon a stretcher, and put an awning above it; then they travelled slowly along to the village where I had left them.

"The girl had not been materially injured by the tiger, but was in a swoon when I first saw her. She had roused up to life in time to see the tiger gallop off down the gully with me in his mouth, and she had hurried back as well as she could, with the natives who had come out with me, and told my men. They had tracked me there, not expecting to find me alive.

"I never saw a human being so grateful to any one as that girl was to me. Through all my long illness at her village, she tended me with entire devotion, and it is just as true that she saved my life as that I saved hers. I know I should not have survived that day's work if it had not been for her. As it was, it was almost a year before I could enter again upon active duty.

"You remember that woman who came to the camp some six months ago—that handsome native woman, with the beautiful eyes? Yes; well, do you wonder that I was angry when some of you made a disagreeable joke about my knowing her? That was the woman who found me that morning. She is married, and was going off up the country, and came to bid me good-by for fear she should never see me again.

"Now, gentlemen, I have only to hope you may never suffer what I did in that twenty-four hours."

☞ The Marquis de Cussy, a French writer on gastronomical subjects, has defined indigestion to be "the ingratitude of the stomach."

☞ The best remedy yet discovered for crazy persons is to employ them in manual labor. This ought to be known in all our villages, towns and cities.

☞ Paris bakers are compelled to weigh their bread in the presence of the purchaser, whether requested to do so or not.

☞ The latest hymn of extraordinary popularity in England is entitled "Paradise." It has quite equalled in general acceptation the well known "Jerusalem the Golden," and will soon be introduced in some of the leading churches in this country.

☞ The train from New York, by the Shore Line, which started at noon on Thursday of last week, arrived in Boston at nine o'clock on Saturday evening, having been fifty-seven hours on the road. The passengers, about sixty in number, suffered most from hunger, as the cars were pretty well supplied with fuel, and when that gave out the stoves were fed with fence rails. The detention all occurred between New Haven and New York.

☞ Would Eve have eaten apples in the Garden of Eden if they had been seven dollars per barrel? We expect not. The state of Adam's funds would not have justified any such extravagance.

THE LADY'S FRIEND.

Splendid Inducements for 1868.

The proprietors of this "Queen of the Monthlies" announce the following novelets for next year:—

A DEAD MAN'S RULE. By Elizabeth Prescott, author of "How a Woman had Her Way," &c.

THE DEHARRY FORTUNE. By Amanda M. Douglas, author of "In Trust," "Stephen Dane," &c.

FLEEING FROM FATE. By Louise Chandler Moulton, author of "Juno Clifford," &c.

These will be accompanied by numerous short stories, poems, &c., by Florence Percy, Harriet Prescott Spofford, Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton, Miss Amanda M. Douglas, Miss V. F. Townsend, August Bell, Mrs. Hosmer, Frances Lee, &c., &c.

The Lady's Friend is edited by Mrs. HENRY PETERSON, and nothing but what is of a refined and elevating character is allowed entrance into its pages.

The Fashions, Fancy Work, &c.

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A Sleepy Bride.

The New Orleans Crescent gets the following from one of the Sisters of Charity at a hospital in that city:

Sister Mary gave an account of a singular marriage that took place during the morning in the chapel. Some time ago the newspapers announced that a young man had attempted to commit suicide in town by shooting himself. He was taken to the Hotel Dieu, and it was feared that the wound was mortal, but with the care he received he was out of danger in a few days. The cause of his attempt to destroy himself then became known. He was in love. His inamorata had promised him three times to marry him, and disappointed him every time. The last time was too much, and a bullet, aimed at the heart, was to end his misery. The cruel lady visited him at the hospital, and there she pledged herself to him again. The ceremony was to have taken place at eight o'clock yesterday morning. The lady again failed. The expectant groom was in a wretched state of mind, until he received a message from her that she had overslept herself, and would be with him at eleven o'clock. At that hour she was there, and the ceremony took place. "Only think," said Sister Mary, "of a bride sending word that she had overslept herself."

A Very Hasty Wedding.

A somewhat novel and romantic wedding took place in Milwaukee, recently, which may interest our lady readers. A wedding was announced to take place in the evening at one of the churches, and of course the seats were crowded. Among the crowd of spectators were a widow and widower, both in the noonday of life, who happened to sit in the same pew. They were slightly acquainted, and naturally whispered upon the appearance of the couple at the altar. At about the conclusion of the ceremony, the widower sighed very audibly and whispered—

"Poor things! I hate to see them start out into the world alone; I'd like to keep the poor creatures company."

"So would I," sighed the widow.

"Say *we* do," said the widower, a bright idea striking him.

"Agreed."

The first ceremony was no sooner over, accordingly, than up marched the hero and heroine of our story to the altar, and in a trice were made one flesh, much to the bewilderment of the audience.

☞ The French Emperor is said to be very much interested in the recent invention for discovering water on the most arid land. He has bought the machine, and personally superintends the experiments. The instrument consists of a long iron tube, terminating in a sharp point, which, forced into the ground, it is said, has never failed within a few minutes to bring water to the surface.

☞ There are 272 Baptist Churches in Maine, and 160 are without pastors.

☞ The Oxford University Debating Society has decided that horse-racing is unworthy of Englishmen.

☞ A *bon-mot* is going the rounds of the West End Clubs in London; it is attributed to a right reverend prelate. Some one asked the Bishop how it was that a noble lord, whose listening faculties are unhappily deficient, should have been put on the Ritual Inquiry. "Why," responded his lordship, "you see that the Government in appointing the commission must needs put something *deaf in-it*."

☞ A lady, the Gardiner (Me.) Journal says, who recently visited a cemetery with her little daughter, observed on one of the stones a neatly cut figure of a horse. Wondering why such an emblem should be used, they examined the inscription closely, but could find no clew to its appropriateness, when her little girl remarked: "I presume she died of the *nightmare*."

A Broken-hearted Mother Attempts the Murder of Herself and Children.

To think of such a tragedy as the following happening amid all the wealth of New York city! And to be gifted a family of children. We take the account from the Daily Tribune:—

It is not often that the pen has to deal with a theme at once so tender and so tragic, as that which it falls in what we have now to relate. The summer visitors of Rockaway, Long Branch, and other watering-places will probably remember a family of four attractive children, who, during the warmer seasons, were wont to pay flying visits to the sea-shore and delight the guests with the exhibition of their artistic gifts. These children were named respectively Daniel, Grace, Marcella, and William Boone, Daniel being 13, Grace 12, Marcella 10, and William 9. They were all genteel, sweet-mannered, and well-bred; Daniel's features were singularly intelligent. His declamatory powers were extraordinary, and when he recited from Shakspeare, his young face became beautiful with a precocious comprehension of the author's meaning. The little girls sang sweetly, and were very much caressed. Even indifferent people pitied and petted these fatherless little ones, singing and reciting their way from city to city, and from shore to shore. No wonder people looked upon them with interest. They were the brothers and sisters of the distinguished Boone children, who, some years ago, flashed in triumph through the United States, evoking admiration from the most critical auditors, and most caustic pens. When away from New York, the field of action for Daniel, and Grace, and Marcella, and William, was the wide world: when in New York, they lived with their mother, at No. 20 Amity-place.

Early yesterday morning some of the other residents at that number in Amity street heard suspicious sounds in the room occupied by Mrs. Boone and her children. The utterances were not screams, nor cries, nor oft-repeated moans. They resembled rather those obscure wails, and choking gasps, and inarticulate murmurs, which bubble up from the spent bosom, when consciousness is almost gone, and life is all but extinct. The lodgers, apprehensive that all was not well, immediately gave information to Policeman Ray, and that officer entered the house, ascended to the upper stories, and broke open the door upon a spectacle before which those who beheld it sickened and shuddered. The mother and her children, in all the hideousness of death, lay stretched on the floor. A friend spoke to them, they answered not; touched them, they felt not; opened their tight shut lids, they saw not. A pungent and acrid perfume pervaded the room, and floated from the lips alike of mother and children. It was the odor of laudanum. Even while restoratives were being sought the victims involuntarily closed their lids, and sank deeper into the sleep of death. Two physicians were hastily summoned, and these poor, unhappy beings were soon partially relieved. With returning consciousness recurred the stinging sense of all that misery which the poor mother had hoped to escape, and Mrs. Boone, in all the anguish of a bruised heart and broken spirit, confessed that, distrustful of Providence, and weary of life, she had administered poison to her children and to herself. She had battled long with the temptation to perpetrate this awful crime. She had rejoiced in the beauty of her children's talents, and in their love for her; she had trembled for their safety and prayed for their success, when they were away from her, among the allurements of a treacherous world; when hope after hope had been wrested away, she had clung to the fragments which she fancied still in view; and at length, her heart brimming with experiences inexpressibly bitter, her husband dead, her children pining beneath her eyes, with no prospect held out to her but that of slow starvation, she had yielded to the impulses of a moment of desperation, and dared the attempt of sending to God her own and her children's souls before their time. The family was at once removed to Bellevue Hospital. Late last evening the children were improving, but Mrs. Boone was still considered in a dangerous condition. One relieving picture in this sad history of destitution is the love of these children for their mother. On many a cold winter night they might be seen on one of the ferry-boats singing songs of happiness with lips quivering with misery. A short time ago they were engaged by Mr. Barnum. The eldest boy's efforts and exploits are truly touching. Many a solitary tour has this affectionate child made through the Eastern and Western states, with absolutely no one to depend upon but himself, but always returning in due time and giving the proceeds of his exhibitions to his mother. On one occasion he went alone as far as St. Louis, Mo., and St. Paul, Minn. Of late, however, he has not been so successful as usual; and perhaps the despondency to which the child gave vent reacted upon the sensitive nature of his helpless mother. He was almost the entire support of the family, and when that support was wrenched away the hapless mother looked upon her children and shuddered, and looked on the far sun—and resolved! A despatch from Bellevue Hospital at midnight pronounced the family out of danger.

☞ Whilst in England the capital invested in railways has, of late, been receiving some very hard blows, it is reported that the capital invested in Prussian railways, about $450,000,000, pays an average of eight and one-third per cent. annually. It is added that economical construction and careful management have produced this agreeable result.

☞ A clergyman at Sheffield asked some children "Why do we say in the Lord's Prayer, '*Who art in Heaven*,' since God is everywhere?" He saw a little drummer who looked as if he could give an answer, and turned to him for it. "Well, little soldier, what say you?" "Because it's headquarters."

☞ A wolf, says Plutarch, peeping into a hut where a company of shepherds were regaling themselves with a joint of mutton, exclaimed, "What a clamor those men would have raised if they had caught me at such a banquet."

☞ The young lady who was carried away by her feelings, returned in a horse-car.

From Peterson's Magazine, Philadelphia.

"The Great American Tea Company's motto," says the New York *Evangelist*, "must be 'numerous transaction and small profits.' The business of its stores 'up town, in the middle,' and we know not where else, must be really enormous, and give it a decided advantage over small buyers. As a general thing the Tea Company's goods are of excellent quality, as is abundantly proved by its continued growth and prosperity, in spite of the enterprise and competition which every sort of business is obliged to encounter in this market."

MONEY CHRISTIANS.—In regard to some of the fashionable and rich churches in New York, the Rochester Democrat correspondent says:—In fact, the wealthy churches in New York do not want a poor man either in their pulpits or their pews. There is such a strong money-worship prevalent in these societies, that a sermon becomes better by degrees, represented by the weight of the preacher's purse. "I like to hear Dr. —— preach," exclaimed a purse-proud saint. "He is one of our class and can feel for us." For every $10,000 in the preacher's inventory his sermons are the better, and to suit the place perfectly he must indeed be a D. D. in the full significance of the title "dollars," "dollars."

☞ Mrs. Mary Augusta Emma Caroline Hempstead Cunningham Burdell Doremus Hyde has brought a divorce suit in San Francisco to strike off her last name.

☞ A Vermonter has produced an apple five inches larger round than the trunk of the tree that bears it.

☞ Dr. Tyng says he hasn't written a sermon since he was a boy. Some one asked him how he became so excellent an extemporaneous preacher. "By ruining half-a-dozen parishes in the attempt," was the witty reply.

☞ Dickens is fifty-five years of age.

☞ The Prussian troops, who formerly marched only one hundred paces a minute, now have to make one hundred and twenty—the French standard.

☞ A farmer who has much on his land, and yet buys commercial manure, is the victim of the worst kind of fate—that is, superphosphate.—*Exchange.*

☞ The agent of an English farmers' club proposes to buy 10,000 acres in Illinois, and bring over 300 families to settle there.

☞ Carpenter, the artist, in giving some reminiscences of the late President Lincoln, narrates an interview between Mr. Lincoln and Governor Seymour with remarkable minuteness. Ex-Governor Seymour spoils the narrative by pronouncing it a pure fabrication.—*Exchange.*

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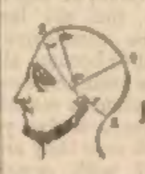

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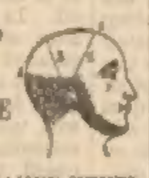

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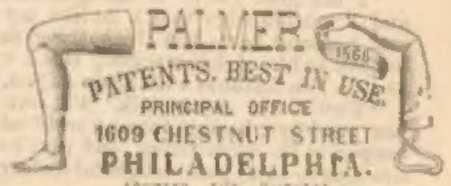

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WINTER TIME, TAKING EFFECT
NOV. 24th, 1867.

The trains of the Pennsylvania Central R. R. leave the Depot, at 31st and Market Streets, which is reached directly by the Market Street Cars, the last car connecting with each train leaving Front and Market Streets thirty minutes before its departure. The Chestnut and Walnut Street cars run within one square of the Depot.

ON SUNDAYS—The Market Street cars leave Front and Market Streets 35 minutes before the departure of each train.

SLEEPING CAR TICKETS can be had on application at the Ticket Office, North-West corner of Ninth and Chestnut Streets, and at the Depot.

AGENTS OF THE UNION TRANSFER COMPANY will call for and deliver baggage at the Depot. Orders left at No. 901 Chestnut Street, No. 116 Market Street, or No. 4 South Eleventh Street, will receive attention.

TRAINS LEAVE DEPOT, VIZ.:

MAIL TRAIN	8.00	A.M.
FAST LINE	12.00	M.
ERIE EXPRESS	12.00	"
PAOLI ACCOMMODATION, No. 1	1.00	P.M.
HARRISBURG ACCOMMODATION	2.30	"
LANCASTER ACCOMMODATION	4.00	"
PARKESBURG TRAIN	5.00	"
CINCINNATI EXPRESS	8.00	"
PAOLI ACCOMMODATION, No. 2	9.00	"
ERIE MAIL	11.15	"
PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS	11.15	"
ACCOMMODATION	11.30	"

Erie Mail leaves daily, except Saturday.
Philadelphia Express leaves daily. All other trains daily, except Sunday.

THE WESTERN ACCOMMODATION TRAIN runs daily, except Sunday. For this train tickets must be procured, and baggage delivered by 5.00 P.M., at 116 Market Street.

TRAINS ARRIVE AT DEPOT, VIZ.:

CINCINNATI EXPRESS	1.25	A.M.
PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS	7.10	"
PAOLI ACCOMMODATION, No. 1	8.30	"
ERIE MAIL	9.35	"
FAST LINE	9.35	"
PARKESBURG TRAIN	9.10	"
LANCASTER TRAIN	1.10	P.M.
ERIE EXPRESS	1.10	"
DAY EXPRESS	6.30	"
PAOLI ACCOMMODATION, No. 2	7.10	"
HARRISBURG ACCOMMODATION	9.50	"

For further information, apply to
JOHN C. ALLEN, Ticket Agent, 901 Chestnut St.
FRANCIS FUNK, Ticket Agent 116 Market St.
SAMUEL H. WALLACE, Ticket Agent, at the Depot.

The Pennsylvania Railroad Co. will not assume any risk for Baggage, except for Wearing Apparel, and limit their responsibility to One Hundred Dollars in value. All Baggage exceeding that amount in value, will be at the risk of the owner, unless taken by special contract.

EDWARD H. WILLIAMS,
sp7-tf *Gen'l. Sup., Altoona, Pa.*

WHISKERS!—A heavy Beard is warranted in five weeks by using Russell's Italian Compound. Sent closely sealed from curious eyes for 50 cents. RUSSELL & CO., Watertown, New York.
oct12-3m

$3000. AGENTS Wanted. $10 made from $1. Call and examine an invention needed by everybody. No experience necessary. Business light. Situation permanent—employment immediate. C. L. VAN ALLEN, 48 New Street, New York. oct12-3m

TRUE, BUT STRANGE.—Any person sending us their address, with 20 cents, will receive, by mail, the Name and a Carte de Visite of their future Wife or Husband. REEVES & CO., 78 Nassau St., New York. oct26-3m

$25 PER DAY.—Agents wanted, Male and Female, Local and Travelling. Business new. Steady employment. No capital required. Address REEVES & CO., 78 Nassau St., New York. jy6-1y

CURLS! CURLS!—One application will curl your hair into beautiful curls, and last six months in every case, or money refunded. Sent by mail, postage paid, for 50 cents a package, or three for $1. Address M. A. JAGGERS, Calhoun, Ill. dec14-4t

WIT AND HUMOR.

The Story of Enoch Arden.

There is one sensible married man in this state who was a soldier and reported to have been killed, but was only a prisoner. He returned to find that his wife had turned over a new leaf in the marriage service, and that another man occupied his seat in the chimney-corner. Did he go to work to slaughter the false wife and new husband? Not much. He walked in and said:

"Well, old gal, how is things?"

"Putty good, Bill," said the double-married woman, not taken aback greatly.

"Which do you prefer—the old or the new love?"

She hesitated for an instant and then said—

"I don't like to hurt your feelings—but—but—"

"Oh, spit it out! Don't mind my feelings or the other chap's. I won't be angry if you come down a little rough on my vanity. Count on me being amiable. I won't cut up rusty if you should go back on me."

"I am glad you're so thoughtful, Bill; and I acknowledge that I do like my present husband best; but if anything should happen to him, I know nobody else I would so soon join fortunes with again as you."

"That's the way to talk. I'll now bid you good-bye, hoping that no accident will happen to the other fellow, and that he will live long to enjoy your delightful society. So good day."

And the careless husband travelled off with his knapsack on his back, whistling, in cheery, clear tones, "The girl I left behind me."

A Courtship In Puns.

A certain Mr. Par, being smitten with the charms of a certain Miss Ann Marr, a belle whom he met at Newport, was exceedingly perplexed to contrive how he should open his heart to her. At length he met her, and it was for the last time that season, at a public dinner, and in the dread of losing her forever, he resolved even there to make a desperate effort to pop the question. Fortune favored the attempt. It happened that opposite to the gentleman there was a plate of Parmesan cheese, and near the lady stood a crystal dish of marmalade.

"Will you do me the honor to accept of a little *Par*, Miss Ann?" said the lover, with a look full of meaning, and moving his hand toward the cheese.

"Tell me first," replied the damsel, with admirable readiness, lifting, at the same time, the top of the crystal, "whether or not you are fond of *Marr, ma lad?*"

"Above all things in existence!" exclaimed the enraptured youth.

The offers were mutually accepted, and understood as pledges of personal attachment by the parties, although nobody else comprehended the equivoque, or discovered anything in the transaction but common civility. The treaty thus opened was soon ratified, and Miss Ann Marr was invested with the title of Mrs. Par.

We hope that the result gave no offence to either ma or pa.

Mistook the Article.

A young lady stepped into one of the street cars the other day, and dropped her handkerchief upon a vacant seat, as much as to say, "taken," while she advanced to the other end of the car to deposit her fare. Meantime a nicely dressed young man jumped in and sat down on the handkerchief without observing it. The young lady, after paying her fare, turned back, discovered to her chagrin her seat was occupied, and sat down opposite, ladies making room for her. But she did not desire to lose her handkerchief, so she looked intently toward the place where she had left it, hesitating whether to ask for it or not. Discovering the direction of her looks, all eyes on the opposite side of the car were soon bent on the young man. Finding himself the object of so much attention, he himself looked and discovered to his horror something white on which he sat, the end peeping out. He mistook its character. To cover it with his hand, and to tuck it nicely away, was the work of a few moments. None in the car but the young lady knew that the "something white" was a handkerchief, and hesitating still more to ask him, she lost it.

How Old is He?

It became necessary recently in the Criminal Court at Newport, Ky., in order to render a boy witness competent, to prove that he had reached the age of ten years, and his mother, an Irish woman, was called for that purpose.

"How old is your son John?" quoth the lawyer.

"Indade, sir, I dunno, but I think he's not tin yit," was the reply.

"Did you make no record of his birth?"

"The prast did, in the ould country, where he was born."

"How long after your marriage was that?"

"About a year; may be lisa."

"When were you married?"

"Dade, sir, I dunno."

"Did you not bring a certificate of your marriage with you from the old country?"

"Hey, sir? and what should I made wid a certificate whin I had the ould mon himself along wid me?"

No further questions were asked.

AMUSING.—At the time when we were in the midst of our war-flurry, and men had got their piety and their patriotism so mixed up that they didn't know which from 'tother, the elder of one of our populous churches, having finished his sermon and closed his Bible, looked round upon his congregation with a countenance which indicated that he had something of importance to communicate. The audience as in duty bound, rustled a little, and then subsided into the silence of intense expectation. After the suspense proper before the delivery of a weighty matter, the elder opened his mouth and announced: "The closing prayer will be made by *a brother-in-law of General Grant.*"

☞ The fence of a graveyard in Richmond, Ind., bears an inscription in large white letters: "Use ———'s Bitters if you would keep out of here."

AWFUL TO THINK OF!

AFFECTIONATE WIFE.—"Oh, William, did you see this in the paper about these Fenians? They threaten to sacrifice all 'the prominent Englishmen!' Now, do keep indoors, for think how prominent you are!"

CONSTANCY.

"Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds."
—*Shakspeare Sonnets.*

Voices whispered in her ear,
Voices breathing words forlorn;
"Now no more he holds thee dear—
Scorn him, with a maiden's scorn."
She said, "Speak on, an' if ye will—
For all your words, he loves me still."

Comes her sister to her side,—
"Alice, did my lover prove
Once so slighting of his bride,
Crushed for aye would be my love."
She said, "Your love were quick to kill,—
For all your words, he loves me still."

"Hear thy mother, daughter mine,—
Passing years have made me wise,—
Many a love, as strong as thine,
Withered by man's falsehood, dies."
She said, "Be wise, an' if you will—
For all your words, he loves me still."

"Read thou then his words, poor child!—
His own words. Dost now believe?"
Through her tears the maiden smiled,—
"I may love, though I must grieve,"
She said, "you cannot have your will,—
For all his words, I love him still."

S. PHILLIPS.

Mechanical Uses of Castor Oil.

It is not as universally known as it deserves to be that castor oil is as useful in the trades as it is as a medicine. It is much better to soften and to redeem old leather than any other oil known; when boots and shoes are greased with it, the oil will not at all interfere with the polishing afterward, as is the case with lard, olive, or any other oil. In Harrisburg, Pa., the old leather hose of some of the fire companies was greased with it, and found to become almost as soft and flexible as new leather. Leather belts for transmitting motion in machinery will usually last from three to five years, according to the wear and tear they are exposed to; when greased with castor oil they will last ten years or more, as they always remain flexible and do no not crack. Besides this advantage, castor oil will prevent slipping, so that a belt three inches wide, impregnated with it, will be equal to a belt four and a half inches wide without castor oil. It is necessary, however, to wait twenty-four hours, till the oil has disappeared from the surface and penetrated the leather, otherwise the freshly-greased surface will cause slipping. The rats and other vermin detest anything impregnated with castor oil, and will not touch it, is another advantage.

A FALSE COUNT.—When the mail boat from New Orleans arrived at Mobile with the Japanese, the distinguished foreigners arranged themselves on the deck, and one of their number counted them to see whether any were missing out of the twenty-four. The count showed that only twenty-three were present. All of the Japs on the boat then counted with the same result. Finally convinced that one was missing, they ran about in wild confusion. Finally Mr. Marshall counted them himself and found them to number twenty-four. The trouble had been that each Jap had neglected to count himself.

☞ A barrister recently said in court, that in nearly all London houses of a recent date, a child falling from a bed or a boy jumping on a hearth would be sufficient to cause the ceiling of the room below to fall.

AGRICULTURAL.

Hogs in Orchards.

We cut the following from the Rural American, and we endorse unqualifiedly the editor's conclusions. We have in mind a New England orchard that was used for a hog pasture for more than twenty years, and for aught we know, had been used in like manner for many years previous. The trees were giants in their line, and a crop of fruit annually a sure thing. From that orchard a worm-eaten apple was a rarity. The hog is the best cultivator, and the best insect remedy that can be put into an apple orchard. We know it from more than twenty years' observation. After the stems of the trees have attained a size of three or four inches in diameter, hogs will do the trees no injury. The domestic fowl—hens, chickens, &c.—will also do good service in the orchard, whether apple, cherry or plum, for they are always on the alert for insects, without indulging in the thieving propensities of the robin and other birds:—

"It has long been believed that hogs are very useful in orchards, to eat up the wormy fruit that falls. We have lately heard a farmer say, that of two orchards on his farm, the one in which he let his hogs run bore him almost double the amount of good fruit, as compared with one from which they were excluded. But others doubt this. They say that the coddling moth (the common apple worm) leaves the apple before it falls, and burrows in the ground. They insist that the insect does not propagate its kind in the apple, as it does in plums and peaches. We beg leave to express a doubt here. We know that we have found worms in apples, and cannot believe that the common notions on this subject are groundless. At any rate, we make it our yearly practice to pick up all the worm-eaten fruit under a few pet trees *in our back yard, and feed them to our* horse; and we know that the fruit on those trees is annually improving. In a large orchard, we should let the hogs pick them up. That the dung dropped by the hogs and the little rooting which they do are beneficial, there can be no doubt."—*Iowa Homestead.*

A Sweet and Sour Apple.

Captain Benj. Allen of Greene, Me., raises in his orchard a variety of apples which is a great pomological curiosity, as well as a puzzle. It is made up of alternate sections of sweet and sour, each section including about one-eighth of the apple. When the apple is well grown, the sections are regular and vary but little, if any, in different apples, and they are always distinct. In size, form and keeping propensities, it resembles the Rhode Island Greening—in fact, the sour part is that kind of apple. When first picked, the whole apple is of a greenish color, and the sweet and sour sections are not easily distinguished; but as it matures, the sweet sections assume a rich yellow color, while the sour part is that greenish yellow, peculiar to the Greening.

My father obtained scions from Mr. Allen's orchard, and for many years raised some of the apples, but the tree was blown down, and now, I think, there are none to be found only in Mr. Allen's orchard. Many a time I have seen my father, when he had company, surprise them by cutting first a piece of sour apple for them to taste, and adjoining that a piece of sweet, from the same apple. The tree now in Mr. Allen's orchard was grafted many years ago, but I think no one knows where the scions came from. How was such a variety produced? Was it a natural growth from the seed, or was it produced by artificial means? I think it must have been done by artificial means, but what those means were, would probably need some experiments to prove.—*Z. A. Gilbert, in Maine Farmer.*

Items.

A CORRESPONDENT of the Maine Farmer, after travelling extensively in Europe, says that in Switzerland, Eastern France and Prussia, he was struck with the adaptation of the beech for a thin but effective hedge. It branches little, is stiff and keeps its place. He saw but little that was killed or injured by dry seasons. He thinks it may be used here with much success, making a beautiful hedge, if care is used in shortening in.

FAMILY GLUE.—I make my glue in the following way: Crack up the glue and put in a bottle; add to it common whiskey; shake up, cork tight, and in three or four days it can be used. It requires no heating; will keep for almost any length of time, and is at all times ready to use, except in the coldest of weather, when it will require warming. It must be kept tight so that the whiskey will not evaporate. The usual corks or stoppers should not be used. It will become clogged. A tin stopper, covering the bottle, but fitting as closely as possible, must be used.—*Germantown Telegraph.*

BLANKETING HORSES.—Many times I have taken my seat to pen a few lines for your paper, but have as often deferred the accomplishment of my purpose. The subject that I now propose to write upon is the winter care of horses. From what little experience I have had in taking care of them, I have come to the conclusion that a team of horses is better off not to be blanketed. Two years ago I had two horses, and kept them blanketed all the time, save when they were on the road. They both had frequent colds, run at the nose, and shivered when coming in contact with the cold air. When taking them out of the stable, in the morning, to water, with the blankets off, they would tremble like an aspen leaf. Last winter I did not put a blanket on to either of them, and I did not see any signs of a cold, nor did I see one of them tremble after drinking. Even when I came in with them quite warm and sweaty, at night, I could see no inconvenience from not blanketing them. Now, hoping that some more abler pen than mine will take up the subject, I submit the foregoing as the result of my experience.—*New England Farmer.*

THE trustees of the Pennsylvania Agricultural College have decided to locate the experimental College Farm in the county of Chester, provided the citizens thereof will give five thousand dollars as a bonus for this mark of preference. The Germantown Telegraph thinks this will please the Chester county people, but hints that unless the managers of the farm are wide awake they will be excelled in products and management by many of the farmers in that county.

PHILOSOPHY OF DRAINING.—"Take this flower-pot;" said the President of a meeting in France lately; "what is the meaning of this small hole at the bottom?—to renew the water. And why to renew the water?—because it gives life or death—life, when it is made only to pass through the bed of earth, for it leaves with the soil its productive principles, and renders soluble the nutritive properties destined to nourish the plant; death on the other hand, when it remains in the pot, for it soon becomes putrid, and rots the roots, and also prevents new water from penetrating." This is the real theory and illustration of draining.

FROST LINE.—It is known to almost all the natives of Western North Carolina, that at a certain elevation on our mountains, there is a *stratum* of atmosphere so peculiarly constructed, and so dry, that it will not permit the formation of frost. When a farm is located so far up on the mountains as to be above the region subject to spring frosts, we say it is above the frost line. Orchards so located never fail to bear full crops on account of spring frosts. The peach, in these situations, sometimes fails from the destruction of fruit buds by winter-killing, though this is unusual. I am not aware that the apple ever fails at this elevation, even from this cause.

RECEIPTS.

LEG OF MUTTON BRAISED.—Bone the mutton, without tearing the stem, lard it with bacon seasoned with spices; do not let the larding be seen outside the meat; bind it with twine; crack the bone at the back, *to bend it back so as to fit the stew-pan or braise-pan. Put it into the stew-pan* with six onions and carrots, a large bunch of sweet herbs and parsley, salt and spice; add the bones also of the mutton, two slices of bacon, and two glasses of stock or water. When it comes nearly to a boil put it by the side of the fire, or on a hot hearth, with hot cinders on the cover, and let it simmer gently seven hours. When it is done enough skim the sauce well and strain it through a tammy, warm it, and pour round the mutton or over it. Or you can reduce a part of the sauce to a glaze, and with it glaze the mutton. In this case the gravy must not be poured over the meat, but round it.

MINCED FOWL.—Take the remains of a roast fowl, and cut off all the white meat, which mince finely, without any skin or bone; but put the bone, skin, and etceteras into a stewpan, with an onion, a blade of mace, and a handful of sweet herbs tied up; add nearly a pint of water; let it stew for an hour, and then strain and pour off the gravy, putting in a teaspoonful of Worcestershire sauce. Take two hard-boiled eggs and chop them small; mix them with the fowl; add salt, pepper, and mace, according to taste; put in the gravy; also half a tablespoonful of very finely minced lemon-peel, one tablespoonful of flour, made into a smooth paste with a little cold water, and let the whole just boil. Serve with sippets of toasted bread.

CRULLERS.—Three eggs, nine tablespoonsful of powdered white sugar, eight tablespoonsful of butter, half a teacupful of sweet milk, half a teaspoonful of soda, flour enough to roll out; fry in nice lard. Care must be taken not to get more soda than the receipt calls for, as too much will take in the lard.

MOUNTAIN CAKE.—One pound of sugar, half a pound of butter, five eggs, one cup of milk, a little nutmeg and cinnamon, one pound of raisins, one glass of wine nearly full, one pound of flour, one teaspoonful of soda, and two teaspoonsful of cream of tartar.

MOLASSES CAKE.—Three cups of molasses, one of butter, one of sour milk, two eggs, one spoonful of saleratus, salt, and spice, one quart of flour.

CLEANING DECANTERS.—Fill the bottle with cold water and let it stand in it all night. Cut up a potato into small dice, put them into the bottle (having first poured away the water), and shake them up and down in it quickly for some time, with a very little water, after which rinse the bottle out and place it in the bottle-stand top downwards, to drain thoroughly.

BATTER PUDDING.—One quart of milk, six eggs, a little salt, and eight tablespoons of sifted flour. Bake in a quick oven about half an hour.

APPLE SNOW.—Pare and core eight or ten tart, juicy apples, boil them in water sufficient to cover them, till they are soft, taking care to keep them whole; then remove them from the stewpan, make a syrup of nice white sugar, and replace them; let them simmer slowly till they are amber colored, then place in a glass preserve dish; beat to a stiff froth, the whites of eight eggs, and two-thirds of a cup of sugar, and spread over the top. It is improved by being kept on ice, and is grateful to the eye and palate, either for desert or tea. The yolks of the eggs may be used in making a boiled custard.

THE RIDDLER.

Enigma.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I am composed of 19 letters.
My 5, 17, 8, 7, is dreaded by all.
My 10, 6, 18, is an intoxicating drink.
My 11, 2, 14, 13, 15, 16, is what we all do at times.
My 9, 12, 10, is what we all try to do cheap.
My 8, 4, 14, 5, 7, 16, is not to agree.
My 1, 7, 18, rules the world.
My whole is what we must sooner or later be.

"LARRIE."

Rebus.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

A celebrated battle-field.
One of the English kings.
A monstrous reptile.
One of the signs of the zodiac.
One of Burns's poems.
A celebrated chain of mountains.
A noted philosopher who was put to death.
A spirituous liquor.
A river in Asia, mentioned in the Bible.
A fabled ferryman.
The last letter of the Greek alphabet.
An extinct animal.
An English measure.
A river in South America.
An imaginary being.
One of the divisions of Africa.
A climbing plant.
A celebrated garden.

The initials form a question often asked by the present readers of "The Saturday Evening Post."

W. H. MORROW.

Irwin Station, Pa.

Riddle.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I am composed of four letters.
Omit my 1st and I unfasten.
Again curtail, and I am a vegetable.
My 1, 2, 4, is a garden implement.
My 3, 2, 4, is the name of a deceased American poet.
My 1, 2, 3, is a useful plant.
My whole mitigates sorrow and sheds a brightness over our darkest hours.

Baltimore, Md. EMILY.

Problem.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

If by the attraction of the moon a tide of 6 feet be raised at the earth's surface, what will be the height of a tide raised by the attraction of the earth at the moon?

W. H. MORROW.

☞ An answer is requested.

Mathematical Problem.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

A clock which indicates true time at the foot of a mountain loses 40 seconds a day when carried to the top of it. Required—the height of the mountain, supposing the earth to be a sphere of 7,912 miles diameter.

ARTEMUS MARTIN.

Franklin, Venango Co., Pa.

☞ An answer is requested.

Conundrums.

☞ When is a window like a star? Ans.—When it is a sky-light.

☞ Why is a fifty-pounder gun like a rain-shedder? Ans.—Because it is a number-L-or!

☞ When is iron the most ironical? Ans.—When it's a railing.

☞ When can a road be said to be decided in its views? Ans.—When it has a positive inclination.

Answers to Last.

ENIGMA—Baltimore. RIDDLE—Myrtle.

The Privacy of Great Cities.

Nowhere, save in the wilderness, beyond the frontiers of civilization, can such perfect privacy be enjoyed as in a large city. The denizens of a busy metropolis have enough to do in attending to their own affairs. They have no time to bestow on the doings of their neighbors, and take no interest in them. The curiosity of villages and small towns is insatiable. Espionage is the main employment of at least one-third of their inhabitants. If a stranger takes up his abode among them, he becomes at once the centre of observation—a target for conjecture—a standing topic of conversation. His antecedents are inquired into, his character is canvassed, his manner of life is carefully noted, his dress, features, fortune, if he has one, want of it if he has not, are made the subject of earnest discussion. A jury of matrons sits on his case daily, until everything ascertainable concerning him has been ascertained, and if inquiry is baffled, and no Arian can find a clue to his past, guess work, in due time, takes the place of facts, and he is "reckoned up," as Inspector Bucket would say, on a fancy basis. A previous history he must have, and, in absence of any authentic record, he is furnished with one by the tongue of gossip. But in a bustling city, you can settle down anywhere without attracting the slightest attention. You care for nobody and nobody cares for you, as the song says. The family in the adjoining house does not recognize you when they see you, and if you do not publish your name on a door plate, and your servants are not on visiting terms with the kitchen circle next door, you may remain for a twelvemonth as utterly unknown to the beings whose laughter you can hear through the party wall, as if you dwelt in Central Africa. People talk of seeking retirement in the country. The idea is ridiculous. If you want to be isolated from the world, live quietly in the midst of a densely populated and busy district.

☞ A party of travellers in Hawaii lately stopped to lunch on the side of Mauna Loa, after investigating the crater, and boiled their turkey by the volcano. They wrapped the noble bird in banana leaves and poked it into a crack in the mountain, and it was cooked by steam.